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Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6351st meeting

Wednesday, 30 June 2010, 10.15 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Čolaković
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Lolo
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 40 of resolution 1917 (2010) (S/2010/318)

Letter dated 14 June 2010 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2010/325)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 40 of resolution 1917 (2010) (S/2010/318)

Letter dated 14 June 2010 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2010/325)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Italy, Norway and Pakistan, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. De Mistura to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano, in which he requests to be invited in his capacity as acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Serrano to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I wish to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/2010/318, which contains the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 40 of resolution 1917 (2010). I also wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2010/325, which contains a letter dated 14 June 2010 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, and by Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan, Permanent Representative of Turkey, who led the Security Council mission to Afghanistan. I now give the floor to Mr. de Mistura.

Mr. de Mistura (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a great pleasure, Mr. President, to see you here again following the Council's mission to Afghanistan.

(*spoke in English*)

I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate a little bit about the United Nations activities in Afghanistan and the priorities in the current Afghan environment. I will be a little shorter than usual, because we had the privilege of having the members of the Security Council visit Afghanistan. The members of the Council have therefore seen with their own eyes and heard with their own ears about the current situation there. I would like, in that connection, to thank the Council for its visit. Coming just slightly more than three months after I took up my new assignment, the visit was a very timely one for all of us.

This is indeed a crucial year in Afghanistan. I think that anyone here who has been there must have had the same feeling. This is a year in which all of us, together with the Afghan authorities and the Afghan people, are trying to reach a form of stabilization in the situation. Everybody acknowledges the fact that there is no military solution alone to the current situation in Afghanistan. There must be a lot more, and that is what we are working on together. What we need is a political vision that addresses the concerns, the aspirations and the hopes of the Afghan people and of all stakeholders, in particular those in the region.

This is also a year with a calendar densely packed with events. In that sense we are moving in the right direction. The London Conference has been held, which was very useful. It signaled the support of the international community for the Afghan authorities during this crucial year. The Consultative Peace Jirga has also been held, which was equally extremely helpful because it gave everyone, Afghans and foreigners, the opportunity to realize that there is a common feeling as to how to address the dialogue in order to have more Afghans inside the large tent where we all attended the Jirga. The next step is the Kabul Conference, to which many foreign ministers will go. I understand that the Secretary-General has also confirmed that he will be attending. It will be a very good opportunity for a stepping-stone.

Allow me to summarize the direction that the organizers of the Conference — who are, of course, the Afghans; we are co-chairing, but they are in charge — are taking. The concept is one of a public contract between the Afghan Government and the Afghan people, and an offer to produce public, concrete delivery of socio-economic improvement. The international community will not be expected to bring new funds, but, if they feel comfortable with those priorities, may be asked to realign bilaterally the resources already allocated for Afghanistan. That would have several advantages. One of them would be to further the concept of Afghanization, which should become not just a word but, increasingly, a concrete fact.

The Afghans feel that very strongly. They are a proud people, historically proven to be so and even more so these days. They need to feel that the future is, in fact, in their hands, and that will be a good opportunity. If they are proposing such concrete programmes, they should also feel that they can lead them and, of course, be accountable for the results. At the same time, this would not be putting more pressure on donor countries, which are, at the moment, feeling the stress of additional funding, because there will be, at most, a request for bilateral realignment of the current funding.

The United Nations, as you know, Mr. President, is now focusing on a three-plus-one initiative. We cannot cover everything, and if we did we would not make a difference or be able to make a difference. The three-plus-one areas are elections, internal and regional dialogue, and constructive regional engagement. The plus-one aspect pertains to aid coherence, namely, helping the international community and Afghan authorities to avoid overlaps and focusing better on ensuring that the huge amounts of aid reaching Afghanistan do not overlap.

Elections are the mother of all issues in Afghanistan and, frankly, for all of us. The previous elections did not go well, and to say they did would be an overstatement. This time we are all trying to work together so that they will be better — not perfect or elections one would see in other countries that do not have the same challenges, but better. Inshallah, they will be better; first, because lessons were learned by everyone and, secondly, because there is much more monitoring taking place internally, among the Afghans themselves.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was able to contribute to one major improvement in the process. As members of the Council will probably remember — so many things have happened — in April there was a moment of difficulty that involved an institutional stalemate between the two institutions of the presidency and the Loya Jirga, which could have blocked the election process. The United Nations, with the cooperation of the whole international community in Kabul, was able to propose, and get approval by everyone for, a formula for what we called the implementation guidelines for the elections.

That produced three results: first, a new electoral chairmanship and a new electoral aid team; secondly, the presence of international commissioners, who would also be there with a role, namely, that no decision would be taken by the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) if any of the international commissioners was not in agreement — a major

element of reassurance, not just nationally but, above all, internationally; and, thirdly, a decision on the role of women. Sixty-eight seats in the Afghan Parliament would be guaranteed for women. If, for whatever reason, as has happened in the past, a woman were to give up a seat, she would be replaced not by a man but by another woman.

All this resulted in an end to the stalemate. Elections are now moving ahead, mutatis mutandis, in the right direction. The new commissioners have been doing their homework. There are now 2,679 candidates, of whom 400 are women. We also are working on setting up 6,835 polling centres and 19,942 polling stations. Thirty thousand new voters have been registered. We are approaching the figure of 12.5 million people expected to vote. It will not be easy. The main challenge will be security, as will the second. If the elections are tarnished by excessive security problems, the result might include the closing of polling stations, and thus the disenfranchisement of people who could have voted. We will have to watch that as we get closer to the date in order to be able to assist the Afghan authorities.

It is the Afghan authorities who are in charge of the elections, with the United Nations and the international community proactively working to support them. An example of that pertains to the vetting process. Some members of the Council who were in Kabul were part of the intense moments relating to the vetting, where the vetting committee, which is a purely Afghan body led by the Ministers of the Interior and Defence and the National Directorate of Security, were unable to come up with any people to be vetted and excluded from the elections. I am glad to be able to tell the Council that the latest information indicates that we are very close to 40 — we had been down to zero — representing different provinces.

A decision is now imminent. If that proves to be the case, it will be a substantive improvement on the impression we had previously, which suggested the vetting was not conclusive in any way. We will face difficult moments with regard to the elections. But I can certainly tell the Council that, at the moment, the decisions of the Chair of the Electoral Commission and the members of the other commissions are reassuring to everyone, including those Afghans who felt that the elections could have been heading in the wrong direction. We will cross that bridge when we get there, and I may require the support and assistance of the Council if we get into difficulties. But at the moment, it is so far so good.

Dialogue is the second area of priority for our own focus. As you know, this is, again, Afghan-led and should be Afghan-led. But the United Nations has the capacity in assisting those types of discussions that may take place or are taking place. One example was the Hezb-i-Islami visit to Kabul, where the United Nations, in coordination with the presidency, did receive the Hezb-i-Islami team in order to make them feel that, when they move into a dialogue-type of conversation instead of fighting, the international community does recognize that fact and is ready to facilitate it.

We are of course looking forward to confidence-building measures, in which we can play a role, and we are. Also, His Excellency the Ambassador of Austria is actively involved in the issue of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) and was able to hold quite a few discussions while he was in Kabul. I will leave it to him to make any relevant comments on the elements of important confidence-building issues regarding future dialogue.

On regional issues, there is agreement by everyone that no substantive, continuous, sustainable stabilization of Afghanistan can or will take place unless we have a constant constructive engagement by all regional players, stakeholders and beyond. That is why I myself, with the permission of the Secretary-General, have been traveling to several regional countries — Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and elsewhere — in order to make sure that we are able to hear their concerns and, in a way, facilitate their constructive engagement in the right direction.

There are other very useful initiatives, and they are to some degree led by countries like Turkey, which has been very active, as the Council knows. We heard the latest relevant information recently when we were in Istanbul and Ankara. These initiatives include the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan initiative, the Shanghai initiative, the Dubai process, which is being proactively supported by Canada, and for our part, on the basis of the mandate the Council has given us, the Silk Road initiative. It has a very charming name, but in fact goes beyond charm. It is meant to engage countries that are not necessarily geographically linked to Afghanistan but have historical or political links. It is aimed at ensuring

that, finally, when this difficult time comes to an end, they will all be part of it.

We are also working on the economic side of it because sometimes that leads to a lot of dialogue. One example is, of course, the issue of drugs, which affects many countries, such as Russia, Iran, Pakistan and, frankly, all of us, once it gets to the countries that are far away. There are also the issues, for instance, of transport or energy. They are all opportunities for a regional dialogue that may then also enhance the political engagement that we all need.

Aid coherence is part of our mandate, but it is also part of a major necessity. The good news is that there are no major contradictions. We have done a lot of studying of that issue on the spot. There is no excessive, shocking overlap between bilateral and multilateral at the moment. What is needed is more help to the Afghan authorities to do what they should have the right to do, that is, undertake the aid coherence approach themselves. We have a mechanism called the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, which is meeting on 8 July. Everyone is part of it. I am co-chairing it on behalf of the Secretary-General. That mechanism needs to be revitalized.

Secondly, the next opportunity for aid coherence is the Kabul Conference. If we come to the Kabul Conference with the type of contract that we have just mentioned — that is, the opportunity for realignment between bilateral and Afghan priorities — the United Nations has the capacity and the duty to assist on that issue. That becomes, by itself, a new form of aid coherence.

Last but not least, there is the possibility of the so-called transition, that is, the movement from military to civilian, particularly with regard to the provincial reconstruction teams, and from civilian to Afghan. In that sense, "Afghan" means with the support and the capacity-building of our 21 regional and provincial offices. By the way, as the Council knows, we have, at the moment, 742 international colleagues on the ground; 940 posts are filled by international staff and 6,000 by national staff. So we are not reducing.

Our position is to simply be careful in squaring the circle between security — we had an attack yesterday and there have been attacks in the past, as the Council knows, as in October when we lost five colleagues — and being present, being proactive, increasing quality when we cannot increase the quantity, focusing on 3+1 areas and not all over, and at the same time, having security in our accommodations. The attack on 28 October was on sleeping accommodations. That is why we are so keen to have the Council's support on the issue of the financial package that is being discussed, not only for Afghanistan but also for Iraq, in order to enable our colleagues to feel that they are not being treated worse than those who are in a more secure environment. We also need support in pushing for the excellent solution that the Dutch Government, through the Dutch embassy, is offering to the United Nations in order to have secure accommodations there. We are working on all that.

The next point is partnership. The Council will ask, and it is right to ask, how we are doing with the International Security Assistance Force and the European Union — in other words, the two civilian representatives who were appointed at more or less the same time that I was. The short answer is, excellent. Members of the Council can ask them. We have a feeling of constructive, common work. We have the right chemistry. We have different mandates, and we should. One would expect us to have that. We sometimes represent different countries as well. We go beyond that in the United Nations, representing many countries that are not in NATO or in the European Union. And we also have slightly different priorities in our focus, and that should be the case.

But the goal is the same, and coordination and common messaging to avoid contradictions at a time when we cannot afford contradictions are taking place. In that sense, I would like to reassure the Council, and I feel pleased to say, that this is moving in the right direction, while each of us is maintaining — naturally and as the Council expects us to — our independence, neutrality and impartiality, but also our respect of the mandate that the Council has given us.

At the end of the day, the goal is the same: the stabilization of Afghanistan and respect for its culture, traditions, sovereignty and religion. That is what we are supposed to do these days, even more than in the past, in view of the growing feeling of the Afghans and the Afghan Government that they should be taking their own future into their own hands.

This year, especially in the coming months - and when I come back, I hope to be able to brief the

Council again on this — we will need to be resilient. The message from myself and my colleagues who have been volunteering to come to Kabul is that this is the time for all of us to be resilient, creative and respectful of Afghan priorities. At the end of the day, only the Afghans will find their own solutions. This is the time to have these three qualities. We need the Council's help if we are to continue to have them.

Lastly, I want to again thank you, Sir, for having come to Kabul. You have no idea how timely your visit was, what a strong boost it was to the morale of my colleagues and what a strong impression it conveyed to the Afghan people that the international community does care, is interested, is committed, and that this is the time that we will not leave them alone.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. De Mistura for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Apakan of Turkey, in his capacity as head of the Security Council mission to Afghanistan.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2010/318) and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura for his comprehensive briefing. After having extensive talks with him in Kabul on the occasion of the Security Council mission to Afghanistan, we welcome his first presentation to the Security Council. I also welcome the Ambassador of Afghanistan to the Council.

I first wish to share my impressions regarding the Security Council mission to Afghanistan conducted from 21 to 24 June — an important period after the Consultative Peace Jirga and before the Kabul Conference. The visit was very productive thanks to the excellent organization of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), as well as to the sincerity of our interlocutors.

We had substantive talks with members of the executive and legislative branches, meeting with President Karzai, Foreign Minister Rassoul, the Speaker of the Wolesi Jirga, Mr. Qanuni, the chairs of the standing committees of Parliament and members of the Cabinet. These included extended interaction with Afghani institutions including the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission. We also had useful discussions with civil society. We visited the NATO training mission. We also met with the main international stakeholders, including United Nations agencies, the International Security Assistance Force, NATO and the European Union. During our field visit to Jalalabad, we met with local authorities, United Nations specialized agencies and families located in the returnee settlement.

During our contacts, we reiterated the Security Council's support for and enduring commitment to the people of Afghanistan and its Government in furthering peace, development and stability. We emphasized the messages in the mission's terms of reference. We particularly stressed the central role of the United Nations in Afghanistan, solidarity with Special Representative Staffan de Mistura and UNAMA. We underlined the necessity of free and fair elections. We welcomed the strong participation of women candidates. We emphasized the importance of economic and social development. We encouraged the Afghan authorities to further their efforts to uphold the rule of law, human rights, women's rights and children's rights. We indicated the importance of combating the narcotics industry and trade. We stressed the importance of regional cooperation.

We were briefed on various issues, including challenges to the legislative elections scheduled to be held on 18 September, the security situation, reconciliation and reintegration, and the importance of regional cooperation. We would like to thank the Afghan authorities and UNAMA for all of the arrangements they have made. The official mission report will be prepared soon.

If you would permit me now, Sir, I would like to make a few remarks in my national capacity regarding the report of the Secretary-General and the situation in Afghanistan. We commend the report, which provides a detailed outlook. We agree with its contents and observations. I also welcome Mr. De Mistura, who held meetings with my authorities in Turkey before coming to New York. We appreciate and support his activities.

I wish to emphasize three points: the empowerment of the Afghan leadership, a comprehensive approach, and regional cooperation. First, the Istanbul and London Conferences brought new impetus. The key words should be Afghanization, Afghan leadership and Afghan responsibility in the period ahead. Afghan ownership should be supported by the international community. Afghan administration

should be empowered. Parliamentary elections in September 2010 will be part of this process. There should be an Afghan-led political process and the United Nations should be part of it.

Secondly, a comprehensive approach should be at the forefront. It should include security, governance, the rule of law, human rights and social and economic development. It should not be limited solely to military means. Four areas need special attention: comprehensive economic development, a strong, well-trained and well-equipped Afghan military and police, inclusive national reconciliation led by the Afghan administration, and modern education and justice systems to effectively combat extremism.

Another key is transition, although it should not be understood as an exit strategy. We will continue to increase our civilian efforts. Turkey has announced the establishment of a new Turkish provincial reconstruction team in Jowzjan. The Turkish civilian-led team will be based on the successful experience of our first PRT in Wardak province. It will bring additional civilian capacity and complement ongoing development efforts in that regard.

Thirdly, regional cooperation and dialogue should be enhanced. Turkey hosted the fourth Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral summit in January with a focus on education. We hosted the Istanbul Summit with the participation of the neighbours of Afghanistan. The Istanbul statement was the first regional manifestation since the Kabul Declaration of 2002 to emphasize regional ownership. We believe it provides a solid basis to enhance regional cooperation. Regional cooperation was also discussed at the London Conference.

As a follow-up to the trilateral process, the Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey met in Istanbul on 7 June. They discussed the level of cooperation reached at the trilateral process, current developments related to Afghanistan, including the Peace Jirga convened in early June, and the upcoming Kabul Conference. Turkey will continue its regional contributions by hosting the Fourth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan after the parliamentary elections.

Before concluding, I wish to emphasize that Turkey sees the Kabul Conference as a milestone in promoting dialogue and harmonizing the civilian and military strategies towards a future vision for Afghanistan. Last but not the least, we would like to offer our condolences for the Afghan UNAMA officer who was killed the other day.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ambassador Apakan for his briefing. On behalf of the Council, I should like to express appreciation to all the members of the Security Council and the Secretariat who participated in the mission, which was very ably led by Ambassador Apakan, for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibilities on behalf of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): At the outset, let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and congratulate you on your work as President of the Council for the month of June. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his most recent report (S/2010/318) and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura for his briefing today — his first in his new role.

Mr. De Mistura and the leadership and staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) have made exemplary efforts in Kabul. In less than three months, Mr. De Mistura has proven himself admirably able in gathering all stakeholders, including regional actors, together around issues and principles of common concern. We are grateful to him, and I would like to say that I look forward to working with him and his colleagues closely in the coming years.

This meeting comes less than a week after the Council's visit to Afghanistan, which I had the honour to be part of. Let me thank all Council members, and particularly Ambassador Apakan of Turkey for his work in leading the mission.

The Council's visit came at a crucial time for Afghanistan. It was an opportunity to assess the current situation and to prepare for the future. More important, it was also an opportunity to better understand the hopes, fears and expectations of the Afghan people. As was evident last week, Afghans are focused in particular on the increased role of their Government in the reconstruction and stabilization process, their expectations of the international community and how to address the insurgency. Our success in the coming

years will depend on our ability to further involve Afghans in those crucial issues.

Seven months ago, President Karzai presented a comprehensive national agenda to re-engage the Afghan people and enable them to take increased responsibility for the governance, development and security of their country. It was subsequently endorsed by the international community in London.

The Afghanistan that we saw last week has made visible progress in the past months towards meeting its commitments, which is also reflected in the report before us today. The Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police, now operating with increased operational capability, are on schedule to reach their combined target size and strength. In partnership with the international forces, we have begun to take back the initiative from the Taliban in some key parts of the country.

In addition, the Afghan Government is increasingly focused on efficiency and effectiveness, cracking down on corruption and promoting the rule of law. President Karzai recently called for initiatives to prevent nepotism in the awarding of high-level contracts and to require businessmen related to high-level officials to disclose their assets. The Government of Afghanistan has also taken steps to prioritize development, particularly in the agricultural sector, in an effort to ensure a sustainable economy, and is investing in minerals and human resource development to promote long-term prosperity.

Furthermore, last month's Peace Jirga brought together a broad and representative cross-section of Afghan society around the common desire for security, peace and justice. The Jirga marked an important step towards building an inclusive and unified Afghan approach to peace and reconciliation and identified concrete steps to be taken in that direction.

At the same time, the Afghan-led parliamentary election process is well under way, with 2,577 candidates, including 406 women, standing for 249 seats. There is a broad commitment on the part of the newly restructured Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission, as well as civil society and the candidates themselves, to ensuring that it is a transparent, fair and credible process that learns from the lessons of the past. In that regard, we appreciate the assistance of the United Nations and the international community in providing financial and logistical support and in helping us to guarantee the security that is essential for a credible election, as was emphasized by Mr. De Mistura. The election will be an important step on the path towards strengthening the engagement of the Afghan people in the establishment of a democratic system.

Three weeks from now, the Government of Afghanistan will convene the international Kabul Conference on Afghanistan, which will allow us to renew the partnership between the international community and the Afghan Government and people, crystallize our shared strategy and begin to implement concrete action plans. It will be chaired jointly by Afghanistan and the United Nations and attended at the level of foreign minister, including representatives of countries, international and regional organizations, as well as financial institutions. It is not a pledging conference, but a chance to detail the objectives reflected in President Karzai's inaugural platform and the London Conference outcome.

Afghans have great hopes and great expectations of our international friends and allies. They are well aware that Afghanistan would still be under the bloody reign of the Taliban and Al-Qaida without the support and assistance of the international community. Nevertheless, they are disturbed by the ongoing debates among and between our international allies and are concerned that sustainable progress may be difficult to achieve if we do not show patience, fortitude and long-term commitment.

The renewed partnership between Afghanistan and the international community must embody the recognition that trust and responsibility are equally important to all partners, rather than being the sole preserve of any one of us. We must continue to work together jointly to meet our own expectations and those of our partners.

To build the confidence and trust of the Afghan people, efforts should be geared towards, first, ensuring that the transition strategy is implemented in practice through capacity-building, empowering Afghans and avoiding waste; secondly, re-engaging the people in the transition process; thirdly, ending the negative perceptions that have favoured the enemy; and fourthly, ensuring visible progress in both the short and the long terms. The Kabul Conference and the subsequent parliamentary elections will be

opportunities to achieve some of those goals, but our efforts should continue and intensify across the board.

The Afghan people have suffered from violence and conflict for over 30 years, and they understand that most of our current enemies are not driven by ideology. My Government has made it a priority to undertake a process to end the insurgency and consolidate security throughout the country.

The Peace Jirga outcome document recommended several steps to be taken towards an inclusive Afghan peace process that would weave Afghan fighters and enemy leaders back into the fabric of Afghan social, economic and political life. The Government of Afghanistan has already started to implement many of those recommendations. We are creating a high-level council to oversee the implementation of the peace and reconciliation process. We have also begun to review detention records with a view to releasing Taliban who are being held without adequate evidence, and have requested this Council to extend the review process of the consolidated list as we prepare to submit a preliminary de-listing request.

However, let us be clear. We will not sacrifice the progress that has been made or the principles on which our constitution is founded. We will begin negotiations with any disenchanted Afghans who are ready to distance themselves from Al-Qaida and to participate in a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

Partnership with the Afghan people has been critical to the progress made thus far and will be critical to the success of the current transition strategy. As was seen last week, there is intense interest and some concern among the Afghan people, but at the same time there is also strength of resolve both in the Afghan Government and in civil society and the pride that Afghans feel in their historic nation. We are eager to build a Government and society that will do justice to that pride. The international community has been a true and steadfast friend to the Afghan people in that struggle, and we look forward to a partnership that is closer, more concrete and more focused.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I welcome the briefing by Special Representative of the Secretary-General De Mistura on the situation in Afghanistan. I would like to thank Ambassadors Tanin and Apakan for their statements. My thanks also go to colleagues from the Turkish Mission, the Secretariat, Mr. De Mistura, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Afghan Government for their efforts and help in ensuring the success of the visit of the Council's mission to Afghanistan.

As a friendly neighbour of Afghanistan, China pays close attention to the development of the situation there. We wish to register our appreciation to the Afghan people and Government for the efforts for peace and congratulate them on the holding of the Peace Jirga in Kabul from 2 to 4 June.

On 20 July, the Afghan Government will co-host, with the United Nations in Kabul, an international conference on the question of Afghanistan. On 18 September, parliamentary elections will be held. With these developments, the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan has entered a crucial stage. I would like to focus my statement on three points.

First, improving the security situation is the primary task facing Afghanistan. Although some progress has been made by the Government in strengthening its security forces, the security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated since the beginning of this year, with a marked increase in security incidents resulting in the deaths and injury of innocent civilians. This not only jeopardizes the safety and security of the Afghan people and their confidence in the prospects for peace, but also negatively impacts the assistance work of the international community. China expresses its concern over this situation. We hope that the relevant parties of the international community will continue to support Afghanistan in implementing various initiatives, including the National Police strategy, assist the Afghan Government in the capacity-building of its security force, and help the Government to assume the important responsibility of maintaining security and stability at an early date.

Secondly, economic and social reconstruction is an important guarantee for the lasting peace and security of Afghanistan. The precarious security situation, backward infrastructure and lack of human resources have constrained the reconstruction and economic and social recovery of Afghanistan. The situation not only impedes the improvement of the lives of the Afghan people and dampens their enthusiasm for participating in national reconstruction, but also hampers efforts to eradicate the insurgency and drug trafficking.

While increasing its inputs in the security area and helping to maintain stability in Afghanistan, the

international community should also pay greater attention to the economic and social development of the country, actively support the Afghan Government in implementing its National Development Strategy and encourage it to make full use of international assistance to build its own capacity for development. We hope that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNAMA will make proposals and provide assistance in this regard.

Thirdly, having the Afghan Government and the people exercise ownership is an important guarantee for the successful peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan. Afghanistan has unique national conditions and a special development strategy and is facing many acute difficulties in the process of recovery and reconstruction. In providing assistance to Afghanistan for recovery and reconstruction, the international community should respect its sovereignty and encourage the Afghan Government and people to exercise full ownership and to choose their own mode of governance and development in line with their national conditions.

The international Kabul Conference on Afghanistan will be held on 20 July. We hope that the relevant parties of the international community will fully hear the views of Afghanistan, consider the priority development areas there, and reach consensus on the next step of assistance to Afghanistan.

President Karzai of Afghanistan undertook a successful visit to China from 23 to 25 March this year, during which leaders of our two countries carried out an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations and the regional situation and achieved broad agreement. China appreciates the efforts of Afghanistan in promoting the process of peaceful reconstruction and will, as always, provide assistance to the Afghan Government and people to the best of its capabilities and further strengthen bilateral cooperation in such fields as the economy, technology, training and trade. We wish every success to the international Kabul Conference on Afghanistan, and hope that the Afghan people will, through parliamentary elections in September, further solidify their unity and common understanding and advance the peace and reconciliation process.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, and Special Representative De Mistura for his comprehensive briefing.

Let me start by underscoring my Government's continued full support for the critical role of the United Nations in Afghanistan. We are deeply grateful for the continuing determination and courage of the men and women of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), who have demonstrated their deep commitment to helping Afghans achieve stability and build democratic institutions in the face of enormous challenges. Our gratitude is all the greater for having seen their work and those challenges first hand on the Security Council's trip to Afghanistan last week.

Our trip reinforced our strong support for Special Representative De Mistura and his team, who are helping the Government of Afghanistan to face its most important and difficult challenges. Their vital work needs resources, especially experienced and capable staff with a wide range of technical expertise. I am grateful to the Special Representatives in the Secretariat for their work in ensuring that priority positions in Afghanistan are filled. I urge the United Nations system as a whole to continue to move energetically and creatively to deploy the needed staff to Afghanistan.

During our three-and-a-half-day trip, the Security Council saw a proud and determined Afghan people working together across economic and social sectors and Government ministries to build a durable future for their country. When we sat with young Afghan students in a refugee resettlement camp, they described their painful inheritance from three decades of war, but they also spoke compellingly about their ability to shape Afghanistan's political and economic future. Their resilience was inspiring, and such resilience will be Afghanistan's crucial reserve as the country faces this year's challenges.

Afghanistan and the international community are entering a new phase of our partnership on the way to full Afghan ownership. As a result, the Security Council focused its trip on those elements that will allow the Afghan people to exercise full control over their destiny, choosing their Government, beginning a dialogue on the conflict, strengthening their ability to provide security and fostering economic and political development.

As part of these consultations, the Council looked in depth at the ongoing preparations for the legislative elections scheduled for September. We welcome the

new leadership at the Independent Electoral Commission and the reconstituted Electoral Complaints Commission. The Independent Electoral Commission leadership spoke of the lessons learned from the 2009 election and its determination to improve the upcoming election's credibility. The Commission also emphasized the need for increased security for polling sites, noting that they did not plan to open polling stations in insecure areas. Similarly, the Electoral Complaints Commission's leaders underscored their commitment to act independently. The United States, for its part, reinforced the importance of the United Nations being prepared to provide enough technical and operational support to meet the needs of both Commissions.

Afghan representatives and Government leaders briefed the Council on Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration efforts designed to pull insurgent commanders and fighters off the battlefield. President Karzai and others emphasized in this context the importance of removing names from the list pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). In consultation with other Committee members, we are thoroughly reviewing each and every individual and entity on the list and determining on a case-by-case basis whether the listings remain appropriate. The United States continues to support de-listing reconciled Taliban who cut their ties to Al-Qaida, lay down their arms and accept the Afghan Constitution. The United States also continues to work with our partners on the Committee and in the Afghan Government to ensure that the 1267 regime can effectively and accurately list individuals and, when appropriate, remove them.

During the trip, Security Council members underscored to our Afghan partners that the Government of Afghanistan's providing credible information on each individual being considered for removal from the consolidated list by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) is vital and urgent. We look forward to receiving that information.

The Council also saw the extensive efforts of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and NATO to build a multi-ethnic national army. The Council visited the Kabul military training centre to talk to ISAF and Afghan trainers. We had the opportunity to see new Afghan National Army recruits from across the country. We learned that recruiting has increased, as has the number of international instructors. Moreover, Afghan soldiers are now being trained and tested against concrete standards. The crucial non-commissioned officer corps is being strengthened.

But much more work remains to be done. More trainers are needed, both to fulfil existing NATO pledges and to fill gaps. Building self-sustaining, capable Afghan security forces is crucial to a meaningful and sustainable transition to Afghan leadership on security.

Council members also witnessed United Nations efforts to help returning Afghan refugees at the Sheikh Mesri resettlement camp. We were briefed by the provincial reconstruction team in Jalalabad on the ways that civilian officials are partnering with Afghans to develop and implement important initiatives on governance, economic development, the rule of law and agriculture. These multilateral and bilateral efforts to build economic and political momentum following military actions are crucial to our strategy's long-term success. To ensure that the international community's efforts are effective, the United Nations should continue to promote coordination and unity of effort.

The United States expresses its gratitude to Special Representative De Mistura, the United Nations team and the Turkish delegation for organizing an effective trip to Afghanistan, and to ISAF-NATO for its support and security assistance. We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Special Representative to achieve our shared goal of helping the people of Afghanistan transform and strengthen their own society and ensure their own security.

Finally, let me underscore our profound thanks to President Karzai, Ambassador Tanin and the rest of the Afghan Government, including the Afghan security forces, for hosting such a productive visit and extending such warm hospitality.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I, too, thank Special Representative Staffan de Mistura for his very helpful briefing this morning. Let me also take this opportunity to thank him and all those who made the Council's mission to Afghanistan possible: the members of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); the Government, Parliament and civil society of Afghanistan; and, of course, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). I would ask Ambassador Tanin to convey our deep

appreciation to President Karzai and his colleagues in the Government.

As Ambassador Apakan made very clear in his introductory statement, the trip was quite useful not only to the members of the delegation, but also to the Council's future work on Afghanistan. We are very much grateful to the Turkish delegation for its excellent work in coordinating this trip.

When the Council discussed the issue of Afghanistan in March, I emphasized the need for the further Afghanization of efforts to address issues in the country. At the London Conference, the Afghan Government made a commitment to enhancing its own efforts towards Afghanization. The international community agreed to back such efforts.

We seem to have been on the right track so far. Efforts on the Afghan side have been moving in this direction in such areas as advancing reconciliation and integration, preparing for elections, ensuring aid coherence and harmonization. Significant progress is being made in building national security capacity with the strong support of ISAF. International backing has been fulfilling its role. To take one example, the Japanese Government extended for an additional six months payroll support for salaries of all Afghan police personnel, providing an additional $180 million for that purpose. Through this assistance, we help improve the capacity of the Afghan police, which is essential to long-term security.

One of the major developments was the Peace Jirga early this month. I congratulate the people of Afghanistan on their constructive discussion. Now is time to make sure that a concrete plan for reconciliation and integration is developed based on the wishes expressed by people at the Jirga. We support President Karzai's leadership in this regard.

Japan welcomes and supports Afghan principles with regard to the reintegration programme, which is in line with the Afghan Constitution, including women's and children's rights. We are encouraged by the efforts of the Afghan authorities to work out the details of the reintegration programme for endorsement at the upcoming Kabul Conference. When it is launched, Japan is ready to support the programme financially through the Peace and Reintegration Trust Fund and calls on other Member States for general support.

Let me also express our appreciation that UNAMA has taken an active and constructive role in helping Afghan authorities to promote dialogue and reconciliation, including in designing the peace and integration programme now being worked out. We hope that UNAMA will continue to play an important role in the peace and integration process.

The upcoming Conference in Kabul will be a major milestone in terms not only of its political significance but also of its substance. From the political perspective, it is significant to hold such a meeting at the ministerial level on Afghan soil at a time when we are stressing the importance of the Afghanization of nation-building efforts. From the substantive point of view, also, the Conference is expected to discuss how to implement the commitments made at the London Conference. It is also an important opportunity to reaffirm the compact between the Government and the people. Japan is ready to contribute to the preparatory work, including through discussion at the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, in order to realize a fruitful outcome for the conference.

It was emphasized by everybody we met in Afghanistan that economic and social development is crucially important for stability in the country. We support UNAMA's approach in emphasizing the Afghan Government's function in harmonizing development aid and taking primary responsibility for ensuring aid coherence. During the Security Council mission, I was impressed by the strong determination of Government leaders to take ownership of setting priorities in each cluster of national development and harmonizing external assistance according to designated priorities in the project. As one of the top donors, Japan will uphold alignment with Afghan priorities as a key principle. We will fully take into account the national priorities identified in the Afghan National Development Strategy, such as rural agriculture development, capacity and human development, infrastructure and energy.

At the same time, as Prime Minister Kan emphasized to President Karzai, it is essential for the Afghan Government to lead us and to continue to take firm steps to tackle corruption and to ensure good governance at the national and provincial levels.

With regard to parliamentary elections, it is essential to ensure a fair and transparent process while

respecting Afghan ownership. The process must be Afghan-led and supported by UNAMA and the international community. Security is a major concern in realizing an inclusive electoral process. We very much appreciate Mr. De Mistura's active engagement with the President in agreeing to electoral guidelines and his ongoing proactive role in support of the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission. We hope that the election will offer Afghan men and women a good opportunity to participate in building a democratic country, and that the contribution that Japan and many other Member States are making to support this process serves their intended goal.

President Karzai paid an official visit to Japan from 16 to 20 June, just before the Security Council's visit to Afghanistan. Through a number of meetings, Japan reaffirmed its historically strong bilateral relationship with Afghanistan and also sent a clear message. The Japanese side promised to support Afghanistan's nation-building efforts. The Afghan side committed to making its best efforts to address the various outstanding issues, including in combating corruption. For the new Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Kan, it was the first meeting with his counterpart, and he took the opportunity to reaffirm Japan's commitment to Afghanistan, as exemplified by its assistance package of $5 billion over five years.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to the men and women of UNAMA. We have seen for ourselves the harsh conditions under which they work and the personal sacrifices they are making. We support and stand by UNAMA, and very much look forward to working closely with the Mission so that the Council can provide the best possible support of its valuable work.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2010/318) and Special Representative Staffan de Mistura for his thoughtful briefing this morning. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Tanin back to the Security Council. As others have said, the Security Council's visit to Afghanistan was timely, and I would like to thank Ambassador Apakan for his leadership of that mission, and also the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Council secretariat for their organization of the trip.

The scale of the challenge was clear to us all, as was the importance of a united international community supporting the Government of Afghanistan. The Council underlined this support to President Karzai and welcomed the strong working relationship between his Government and the United Nations. I am sure my colleagues around this table would agree that UNAMA's focus on delivering its mandate, and Staffan de Mistura's leadership, were impressive. We saw United Nations staff working under the most difficult circumstances. The United Nations continues to play a central role in the overall international effort, and we fully support the Special Representative's focus on the "three plus one priorities": elections, reintegration and reconciliation, and regional cooperation, as well as aid coherence.

As the Secretary-General has reported, the security situation is serious. We were saddened to learn yesterday of the death of a United Nations colleague, killed by a gunman in Kabul. We extend our condolences to his family and to the United Nations.

The increase in attacks on civilians by insurgent groups is of real concern. The near doubling of incidents involving improvised explosive devices and the high number of targeted political assassinations threaten ordinary Afghans. International commitment to increasing support for police training is therefore paramount. The International Security Assistance Force will continue to work both to protect the civilian population from insurgents and to build up the Afghan National Security Forces as rapidly as is feasible. As Ambassador Rice has said, we saw an impressive example of that training work last week in Kabul — in that particular case, British troops empowering Afghan trainers to train new Afghan recruits. Last weekend, Group of Eight leaders sent a collective signal that they want the Afghan Security Forces to assume increasing responsibility for security within five years. In the six months leading up to March, the Afghan National Army grew by almost 20 per cent, with more than 17,000 joining the ranks. We will continue to work with the Afghans to lay the foundations for the transfer to Afghan control of security responsibility for districts and provinces as soon as they are ready.

As the Special Representative has spelled out, we cannot succeed in Afghanistan by pursuing only a military strategy. That is why we support the emergence of an Afghan-led political process that responds to the concerns of Afghans of all

backgrounds, as well as of Afghanistan's key partners. Next month's Kabul Conference is important. We look to the Government of Afghanistan to present its detailed plans and show tangible progress in implementing the commitments made at the London Conference. We are pleased to see the United Nations co-chairing this event, and thereafter expect to see further substantive progress against London and Kabul commitments by November, one year on from President Karzai's inauguration. In particular, we hope to see a clear action plan for improving governance and tackling corruption. These are key areas of concern to Afghans, highlighted by the participants in the Consultative Peace Jirga earlier this month.

On reintegration and reconciliation, we hope that the Afghan Government will launch the Afghan peace and reintegration programme in advance of the Kabul Conference, enabling donors to translate their pledges into firm commitments. Following on from the successful Consultative Peace Jirga, this will play a key role in the development of a political track and wider reconciliation.

Finally, we do not underestimate the challenges that remain for the Government of Afghanistan, for the United Nations and for the wider international community. But the United Kingdom remains firmly committed to the goal of a secure, stable and prosperous Afghanistan, and we will continue to play our full role in helping to achieve that.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for his briefing on the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission (UNAMA) in Afghanistan and all his efforts to make the Security Council's visit to Afghanistan a success. I would also like to thank Ambassador Apakan for his briefing on the recent Security Council mission to Afghanistan to learn more on the ground about the role and support of the United Nations in Afghanistan, and for all his preparatory work for and excellent management of the visit.

I would like to cover the following points. We reiterate our support for UNAMA and its activities in support of the Afghan Government, especially in regard to electoral support, national reconciliation, regional cooperation and human rights. We call for a strengthening of coordination between UNAMA and the other international forces in Afghanistan.

We stress the leading role of the Afghan Government in security, politics and the economy, and national unity, as well as the role of the United Nations in helping and supporting the Afghan people to take gradual control of their own destiny and of the sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan. We have concerns about the lack of improvement in the security situation and the increase in attacks on civilian targets and international forces.

We condemn the terrorist operations that have taken place in Afghanistan and emphasize the links that exist between security and development, as well as the need to address the root causes of conflict there through the political process. Military and security forces alone cannot achieve a settlement. Illicit drug cultivation and trade must also be combated, since they are linked to the financing of terrorist activities.

We welcome the Afghan Government's determination to further national reconciliation and reintegration, as well as its organization of the Consultative Peace Jirga from 2 to 4 June, in which hundreds of delegates participated, representing many categories of Afghan society. A draft outcome document entitled "Peace and reintegration programme" was released, but we still stress the need to pursue efforts towards reconciliation after that meeting and to work closely on organizing more inclusive and representative efforts covering all Afghan political forces. This naturally calls for a new vision and an innovative approach, as Mr. De Mistura stressed in his briefing.

We support the efforts of the Afghan Government and its institutions regarding preparations for the elections scheduled for 18 September. We hope that these will be more transparent and fair than the last round of presidential elections. We are reassured by the information in the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/318) on the active work of the Independent Electoral Commission and on the Commission's fully independent nature. However, we believe it essential to introduce improvements and additional amendments to the electoral law that are inclusive and long-term, and to make the most of the assistance provided by the United Nations in this area.

Finally, we note the importance of uniting international and regional efforts to help Afghanistan achieve stability and prosperity. There are close links between the situation in Afghanistan and the wider

region, of course, and peace in Afghanistan will help promote the interests of all neighbouring States. In this context, we support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to promote regional cooperation, and we hope that the upcoming Kabul Conference on 20 July will be fully successful, putting Afghanistan firmly on the path towards peace and security.

In conclusion, through Ambassador Tanin, I wish to thank the Afghan Government for its hospitality and all of the facilities they put at the disposal of the Security Council's visit.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I would like to join others in thanking Mr. Staffan de Mistura and Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan for their briefings, respectively, on the latest report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan (S/2010/318) and on the Security Council mission to Afghanistan. We sincerely appreciate Ambassador Apakan's able leadership. We commend Mr. De Mistura for the admirable work he has carried out in a very short time and under challenging circumstances.

I also thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his remarks and, through him, the Afghan Government and people for the hospitality extended to the Security Council delegation. The Secretary-General's report and the first-hand comments gathered from Afghan interlocutors last week highlight the progress made since the London Conference, as well as the challenges still ahead in building a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan. Today I would like to address some of these challenges, namely, security, reconciliation and reintegration, regional cooperation, elections and aid coherence.

On the security side, the progress in the force generation and training of the Afghan National Security Forces — slightly ahead of the interim targets spelled out in London — is encouraging. The level of coordination of Afghan and international security forces that the Security Council mission witnessed both in Kabul and in Jalalabad is also to be commended. In order to promote a sustainable and successful transition to full Afghan responsibility, the international community should further enhance the quality of the training of the Afghan forces and provide them with all the necessary equipment and enablers in a timely manner.

Despite the progress made towards fulfilling the London commitments, the significant rise in insecurity, especially in complex suicide attacks and incidents involving improvised explosive devices, remains a cause of concern. Curbing the upward trend in violence is key. Improving the capacity of the Afghan national and sub-national authorities to provide not only security but also governance and development to the affected populations can certainly contribute to that end.

We note with appreciation that the efforts of the international forces to reduce civilian casualties continue to bear fruit. These are steps in the right direction that must continue, including with regard to escalation-of-forces incidents and practices, such as night raids, that deeply affect the sensitivities of the Afghan people.

The armed opposition continues to be responsible for the largest majority of civilian casualties, including those of United Nations staff. Perpetrators should be stopped. We strongly condemn the most recent attack on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We are saddened by the loss of another United Nations staff member in an attack in the streets of Kabul yesterday. We reiterate our support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to enhance Mission staff security.

The Consultative Peace Jirga resulted in strong support and several recommendations from the Afghan people for an Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration process. It is clear that the Afghan conflict cannot be solved by military means alone and that most low- and middle-ranking insurgents can be reintegrated.

At the same time, as the Council delegation could see first-hand, there are divergent views as to when, how and with whom to pursue reconciliation talks. We believe that President Karzai laid out important criteria in his inauguration speech. Peace should not come at the expense of either the fundamental rights of Afghan women and men or accountability for egregious crimes.

Afghanistan's long-term stability and prosperity depend as much on internal reconciliation as on regional cooperation underpinned by mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs. Brazil is encouraged by the several trilateral and regional initiatives to that end. In this context, we welcome the launching of the Kabul Silk Road initiative.

The Security Council mission to Afghanistan coincided with the beginning of the official launching of the campaign for the Wolesi Jirga. We welcome the adoption of the implementation guidelines for the electoral process. Those guidelines reinvigorated electoral institutions and led to a number of women candidates that was even higher than in 2005. Provincial electoral complaints commissions are being set up in order to respond more swiftly to possible irregularities. Such measures help us to draw practical lessons from the 2009 polls. Ensuring the security of the campaign and the polling is now crucial, as was emphasized by Mr. De Mistura. We call on the Afghan National Security Forces and the International Security Assistance Force to redouble their efforts in this regard.

On aid coherence, the Secretary-General's report once again notes significant progress in prioritizing the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and in improving the financial and managerial capacity to implement it. The development cluster system, in particular, is exceeding the initial expectations of the London Conference. The donor community should match these achievements with comparable progress in its commitments to channeling aid through the Afghan budget. Donors should do their best to realign their assistance behind Afghan-led priorities and projects and improved transparency on off-budget aid. The attachment to national ownership and mutual accountability must be measured in deeds.

The very initiative of holding the Kabul Conference, the first international meeting on Afghanistan to be held in Afghan territory, sends a strong message of increasing ownership by the Afghan Government and its people of their future. The Conference is being envisaged as a contract between the Afghan Government and its people that the international community will be called on to support. The international community has a fundamental role to play in assisting the Afghans, whose stability and prosperity are linked to those of its neighbours, near neighbours and allies. We should all remain steadfast in our long-term commitment to Afghan stability.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for the clarity of his introduction of the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/318) on developments in the situation in that country. I would also like to congratulate him on his commitment to promoting stability and peace in Afghanistan despite an especially difficult security and political context. Finally, I would like to thank Ambassador Apakan for his outstanding leadership during the mission and the briefing that he just delivered, which my delegation fully endorses.

The presentations we have just heard provide us with a clearer understanding of the current situation in Afghanistan and prompt my delegation to speak to the three following points: security concerns, the evolution of the political process and future prospects.

My delegation remains deeply concerned by the fresh wave of violence against the civilian population, UNAMA and NATO personnel and humanitarian workers in Afghanistan. In this regard, we welcome the plan currently being formulated to transfer some support functions from UNAMA to Kuwait in order to reduce its overall personnel numbers in Afghanistan without compromising the implementation of its mandate.

Concerning the security of United Nations staff, the Security Council should seize the opportunity presented by the upcoming debate on the protection of civilians to include this specific case in its consideration of the topic.

Despite the alarming security situation, it behooves us to pay tribute to the efforts of the Afghan Government, with the support of NATO, in the field of security sector reform, and in particular in training military personnel and civilian police. These actions are part and parcel of Afghanistan's National Development Strategy adopted at the London Conference of January 2010 and support the political process under way in the country.

The implementation of priorities identified at the London Conference — in particular the return of refugees, national reconciliation, the organization of legislative elections and the strengthening of regional cooperation — are all essential to leading the country's peace and development process to a successful conclusion. The Kabul Conference of 20 July will afford the Government an opportunity to present a national development plan focused on security, economic and social governance. The meeting will afford the people of Afghanistan an opportunity to take ownership of the peace process.

On the elections scheduled for September, my delegation welcomes the democratization of the mechanisms tasked with organizing the legislative elections, namely, the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission. These reforms, which contribute to ensuring transparent elections and credible results, enjoy the significant assistance of UNAMA and the international community. The national reconstruction strategy will be effective only if it is accompanied by ongoing constructive dialogue among Afghanistan and countries of the region.

Regional cooperation is indeed crucial in the context of security, development and the fight against narcotics trafficking. A military strategy alone will never suffice to resolve the Afghanistan issue. The international community must invest itself more in favour of the political process already under way with a focus, inter alia, on inclusive political dialogue. We therefore support the strategy being implemented by NATO's International Security Assistance Force which takes security, political and development aspects into account in its operations.

Gabon, which participated in the Security Council's recent mission as a member of this body, welcomes the fact that the mission gave the international community an opportunity to reiterate its solidarity with the people of Afghanistan, as well as its resolve to backing the Government of Afghanistan and its people in their efforts for peace and reconstruction in their country.

Finally, I cannot conclude without reiterating to UNAMA, Mr. De Mistura's team and the Government of President Karzai our gratitude for having hosted and welcomed the mission during its visit to Afghanistan.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I wish to join other speakers in welcoming the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Staffan de Mistura, to the Security Council. I think I can say that we were all impressed by and grateful for the leadership he is showing in Afghanistan as head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We listened with great interest to his briefing and to the statement of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, whom I also welcome at this table.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Apakan for his leadership and his team, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAMA for their excellent organization of last week's Security Council mission. I believe, like others, that we had a very productive visit, which has helped us to enhance our understanding of the situation in Afghanistan and of the extremely difficult circumstances under which the United Nations is operating. The lack of improvement in the security situation and ongoing reports of recent events — targeted attacks by the Taliban on the civilian population and on United Nations staff members — are of great concern to us.

Austria aligns itself with the statement to be made later in this debate by the European Union delegation on behalf of the European Union. In addition, Austria wishes to make the following points.

We appreciate the work undertaken by the Afghan Government to advance a political solution to the long-standing conflict by way of the development of a peace and reintegration programme and the holding of the Consultative Peace Jirga earlier this month. We welcome the significant efforts to include representation from a wide spectrum of Afghan society in the Jirga. Looking ahead, it will be vital to ensure that all relevant sectors of society are fully involved in the next steps, such as the implementation of the peace and reintegration programme and the establishment of a national high-level peace council. UNAMA should continue to support the Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration process.

We would be interested in receiving more detailed information in the next report of the Secretary-General on how Afghanistan's ethnic communities and the women of Afghanistan are included in the planning and implementation of relevant programmes, including with a view to the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1889 (2009).

We also note that, according to the final communiqué of the Peace Jirga, the people of Afghanistan demand a just peace that can guarantee the rights of all its citizens, including women and children. The Jirga further urged that the law be applied equally to all citizens of the country. It is clear that sustainable peace in Afghanistan will be achieved only if justice is served in tandem with a political solution ensuring accountability for serious crimes of the past. Hence, the Afghan national action plan for peace, justice and reconciliation — approved by the Afghan Government

in 2005 and endorsed by the London Compact in 2006 — should be fully respected in the reintegration and reconciliation process. From our point of view, the amnesty law that came into force at the end of 2009 is not in line with the demands of the Peace Jirga or with international law and should therefore be repealed.

We are also aware that the Peace Jirga called for the removal of the names of the Afghan opposition from the list established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). During the Security Council mission to Afghanistan, our Afghan interlocutors expressed keen interest in the issue of de-listing. In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban, I had a chance to meet with interlocutors on the subject, and I am grateful to UNAMA for facilitating these contacts.

I explained that the review of the 1267 sanctions list is an ongoing process based on resolution 1822 (2008), that it is conducted on a case-by-case basis and is not, as such, linked to current developments. I also indicated that, with regard to possible de-listings of Taliban-related individuals, the Committee would be guided by the following principles: individuals should convincingly renounce violence, lay down arms, break ties with Al-Qaida and fully respect the Afghan Constitution. I note with satisfaction that these criteria square fully with those mentioned by Ambassador Tanin, earlier in this debate.

In recent months we have been working actively with the Afghan authorities to obtain relevant additional data on listed individuals. I encourage the Afghan authorities to urgently provide to the Committee the information required to conclude the review successfully by the extended deadline of 31 July. Let me make this absolutely clear — if this information is to be taken into consideration in the course of the ongoing review, receiving it must be a matter not of weeks, but of days. As I said, I encourage the Afghan authorities to move along these lines. We look forward to continued cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan and UNAMA in the full implementation of resolutions 1267 (1999), 1822 (2008) and 1904 (2009).

Let me now turn to the preparations for the September legislative elections. We appreciate the successful efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to facilitate a solution regarding the status of the electoral law and commend the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission for their ongoing work, including the successful conclusion of the registration phase. The high number of female candidates is a remarkable and positive development. All efforts must be undertaken to ensure their security. Beyond the upcoming elections, we fully agree with the assessment that a more comprehensive and long-term electoral reform is necessary.

Let me also mention that Austria welcomes the recent instruction by the Afghan Ministry of Education that, in view of the threat by the Taliban, schools should no longer be used as polling stations in elections. We therefore hope that the Afghan authorities will do their utmost to act in accordance with that commitment and where, or if, possible extend it to health facilities. I say that because using schools as polling stations in past elections not only led to a marked increase in attacks on schools, but also unfortunately resulted in a lasting decrease in the school enrolment rate.

Let me also say in more general terms that youth make up more than half of the population of Afghanistan and constitute its most valuable resource. In that context, we are also grateful to UNAMA for the efforts that it has already undertaken to strengthen its child protection capacity. We hope that such efforts will be continued.

Finally, Austria looks forward to the Kabul Conference, co-chaired by the Afghan Government and the United Nations. Effective transition to greater Afghan control over security, governance and development, based on a renewed commitment by the Afghan Government to its people, must be the common objective. It will be critical to long-term success that all those initiatives be firmly based on the principles of good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights. That will make it easier for donors to give their support to Afghan-owned national priority programmes. Austria stands ready to continue to support Afghanistan on its way to a more secure and prosperous future.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself with the statement to be made by the representative of the European Union.

We would like thank Special Representative de Mistura, for his work. We listened with interest to

his briefing. Under his leadership, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has made a fresh start and has contributed to a constructive dialogue between the Government and the international community. We support the priorities that it has developed in its three-plus-one approach, which is in line with the mandate bestowed by resolution 1917 (2010). The refocusing of his work on political good offices, the preparation of the elections, support for the reconciliation process and regional cooperation should be continued while maintaining UNAMA's commitment to coordinating international assistance by working to that end with the Afghan Government and the special representative of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In a word, we give our fullest support to the work of the Special Representative.

Here, I would also of course like to pay tribute to the men and women of UNAMA, who assist the Afghan people in difficult conditions, as we know. Their safety must be a priority. To that tribute I would like to add a word of remembrance for the sacrifice of our soldiers, who contribute to the same goal.

This meeting of the Security Council takes on particular significance in the light of the holding of the Peace Jirga in May, the preparations for the upcoming Kabul Conference and the prospect of legislative elections in September. It also takes place at a time when major counterinsurgency operations are taking place in the field.

The Security Council visit was an opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the international community to Afghans in their fight to establish the rule of law, ensure economic development and combat terrorism. The visit also made it possible to better see the main challenges in stabilizing the country. It strengthened our belief that success in Afghanistan depends on a political strategy that incorporates the civil and security spheres.

The military aspect is related to the efforts currently being made by ISAF, whether on the ground or to train the Afghan army and police. The offensive under way was necessary. It must make our enemies understand that negotiation is the only solution. However, the security aspect is also political.

The Afghan Government's policy of national reconciliation and integration is a positive element. That policy should clearly be led by the Afghans, but the United Nations must remain vigilant with respect to the conditions established by the Afghan authorities themselves and sanctioned by the Security Council, namely, the renunciation of violence, the breaking of links with Al-Qaida and international terrorism, respect for the constitution and the protection of human rights and women's rights.

However, if necessary, the role of the United Nations should be more than that of an arbiter. We trust the Special Representative to help, if necessary, to launch negotiations. Today, we must build policy. There will be no reintegration without reconciliation. There will be no reconciliation without political agreement. And it is that political agreement that we must aim for.

With regard to this meeting, we have noted the call by the Jirga and the authorities for a new review of the list held to date by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). We support updating the list so as to strengthen the effectiveness of the sanctions regime. To that end, we count on the cooperation of the Afghan authorities to provide us with information on the people whose removal from the list is requested.

Reconciliation, reintegration and political agreement will only be a reality if they are grounded in improved governance and the fight against corruption in order to meet the expectations of the population, who only too often support the insurgents because they are disappointed by their own Administration.

There is still a long way to go, but we welcomed as very positive the reform programme presented by President Karzai in his inaugural speech. His commitments should now be made more specific in anticipation of the Kabul Conference, and then implemented without delay. Lastly, we attach great importance to the organization of the legislative elections in September. There too, we trust that our Special Representative will help us avoid another failure like the presidential elections.

The Afghan crisis — I am not the first to say it — cannot be approached independently of the situation in the region, in particular in Pakistan. The United Nations is well placed to bring together all regional actors around the common objective of stabilizing the region. We therefore follow with great interest the Special Representative's Silk Road initiative.

In conclusion, I would like to recall a crucial point. The transition we want to set in motion in Afghanistan will not signal withdrawal by the international community, much less abandonment. In any case, as the President of the French Republic has recalled on many occasions, France will remain committed for as long as necessary and as long as the Afghans wish.

Mr. Lolo (Nigeria): I would like to welcome Mr. Staffan de Mistura back to the Council and to thank him for his first comprehensive briefing since assuming office as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. My thanks also go to Ambassador Apakan for his report on, and leadership of, the Council's mission to Afghanistan, as well as to Ambassador Tanin for his statement this morning.

We condemn the attack yesterday by unidentified gunmen on a United Nations vehicle, which resulted in the death of one staff member in Kabul. We convey our condolences to the victim's family and to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

It is clear that the recurring incidence of attacks, explosions of improvised explosive devices and suicide bombs against the civilian population has failed to achieve its goal of derailing the relative peace and stability achieved so far. Such desperate measures by the insurgents, avowed enemies of peace, could not deter the participation of over 1,600 delegates, including 300 women, in the Consultative Peace Jirga, held three weeks ago.

Our debate today is of particular significance because it draws on the assessment of the Council's timely and, one must admit, successful mission to Afghanistan, which ended only a few days ago. The engagement of the Council, through its mission, with a widespread group of Afghan stakeholders, afforded us the opportunity to listen to the Afghan people directly and learn lessons on the ground, and also demonstrated the support of the United Nations for the Government and people of the country. We commend the courage and resilience of people who not only risk their lives under difficult security circumstances, but also send a loud message to the enemies of peace by participating in large numbers in high-profile activities.

With regard to the political and electoral process, the year 2010 is a significant watershed. The legislative elections slated for September should serve to consolidate the peace process. We feel that the elections should avoid the pitfalls of the 2009 presidential elections and be conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner. The three security ministries responsible for vetting candidates and submitting results to the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission should take every step to preserve the credibility and integrity of the electoral process. We acknowledge the enormous scale of the electoral challenges in Afghanistan. While reforms may take a while to yield the desired results, it is necessary to underscore the need for Afghanistan's electoral process to garner public confidence and acceptance.

The commendable contribution of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, under the able leadership of Mr. De Mistura, should be sustained and intensified. In particular, UNAMA should continue to support the Electoral Commission, especially in its efforts to strengthen national capacity and to build mutual confidence and security during the electoral period.

There is also a need for concerted efforts to support the national security forces in their determination to counterbalance insurgency attacks. The successes recorded in the London Conference and the recent Peace Jirga should serve as impetus for the forthcoming Kabul Conference in July 2010, and thus contribute to the consolidation of dialogue, reconciliation, peace and reintegration programmes in Afghanistan. We urge the Afghan Government to seize the momentum of the Conference to rekindle its commitment to tackling the priorities on its agenda, such as stamping out corruption and promoting justice and the rule of law. But we acknowledge also that the best efforts of Afghanistan would not achieve lasting peace without effective and sustained regional support. Therefore, we urge regional actors, especially those with leverage, to remain steadfast in their peace initiatives in the country.

We welcome the important role of the United Nations in supporting and coordinating international efforts to strengthen Afghanistan's capacity to coordinate aid, formulate its own development priorities and receive and disburse funds to finance its needs. The transition to Afghanistan's assumption of greater responsibility for its own security and development, as endorsed at the London Conference, cannot be overemphasized. We hope that the Council

will respond to the concerns raised at the Consultative Peace Jirga regarding the removal of Afghan opposition names from the sanctions list established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) — a point that was made by Ambassador Mayr-Harting this morning. We note that those de-listed should meet the criteria laid down, including denouncing violence, recognizing the Government and Constitution of Afghanistan, and breaking their links to and affiliations with Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups. Indeed, the sanctions Committee has only recently completed the review of all the Taliban names, involving more than 300 persons on the consolidated list, and made appropriate recommendations. In January, the Committee de-listed five men who had held senior positions within the Taliban regime. This action points to the fact that the Committee is responsive and willing to contribute to the efforts to create an environment that is conducive to peace and development in Afghanistan.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Afghanistan. I also thank Ambassador Apakan, who provided effective leadership during the visit, for his report on the recent Security Council mission to Afghanistan. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for his briefing.

We note from the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/318) that, in spite of the strong efforts of the Afghan Government and the international community, the overall security situation in the country remains serious. We are concerned that the number of security incidents increased significantly during the reporting period. As members of the Council know, yesterday a United Nations vehicle was shot at in Kabul, resulting in the unfortunate death of one staff member. We convey our condolences to the bereaved and the United Nations families.

Insecurity remains a great constraint to efforts to achieve peace and development in Afghanistan. This has remained an obstacle to the progress which the Afghan Government and people are striving for. We note, however, that, in spite of the volatile security environment, the Afghan Government has continued to forge ahead with the implementation of national programmes that are critical to the achievement of peace and development in the country, and we commend it for that.

We would like to stress the importance for the Government to reach out to all Afghans in the quest for peace and stability in the country. In this regard, we welcome the hosting of the Consultative Peace Jirga by the Afghan Government early this month. This nationally driven effort is critical to the achievement of peace and stability in the country. We look forward to the effective implementation of the outcome of the national Peace Jirga.

Despite some concerns, we are encouraged by the progress being made in preparation for the September legislative elections. In particular, we welcome the successful registration process conducted by the Independent Electoral Commission. The significant increase in the number of female candidates will enhance the participation of Afghan women in nation-building. We also welcome the progress that the Afghan Government and people are making by increasingly assuming leadership and responsibility for the development process. This is a sure way to build sustainable peace and development in the country. In order to give effective support, we call on development partners and the international community to align their support with the priorities and programmes of the Afghan Government.

We support the four priority areas that UNAMA has identified for United Nations assistance to the Government and people of Afghanistan, namely, support for elections, reconciliation and reintegration, regional cooperation and aid coherence. They will facilitate laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Emphasis on these areas would support efforts in other areas of development.

In conclusion, I wish to underscore the close linkage between stability, security and development in Afghanistan and the region as a whole. A coordinated approach at the regional level and enhanced cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours are also essential, especially in the fight against insurgency and the trade in narcotics. In this regard, we commend UNAMA for its support to regional initiatives that contribute to regional stability.

Finally, we highly commend Mr. De Mistura and his UNAMA team for their good work under very challenging conditions.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General De Mistura for his comprehensive

analysis of the situation in Afghanistan and for the work undertaken by him and the Mission he leads. We also thank the Permanent Representative of Turkey, Mr. Apakan, for his detailed briefing on the Security Council mission to Afghanistan and for his outstanding leadership. We further thank the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for their effective assistance to the Security Council mission.

We support the efforts of the leadership of UNAMA to constructively assist an Afghan settlement in accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council. We believe that the main result of international efforts in Afghanistan should be the consistent achievement by the Afghan authorities of sovereignty over the country's security and economic development and a phased assumption of its principal responsibility in these areas, including security, with the assistance of the international community and under the central coordinating role of the United Nations.

It is in that context that we view the series of forthcoming events, including the international Kabul Conference and the parliamentary elections scheduled for September, which must promote the further building of a democratic Afghanistan and effective State institutions. We also support the processes of political settlement and national reconciliation in Afghanistan provided that they do not run counter to the interests of long-term stability and corresponding Security Council efforts.

Dialogue is possible only with those who have laid down their weapons, recognized the Constitution of Afghanistan and genuinely severed all ties with Al-Qaida and other terrorist structures. We believe in the necessity of strict compliance with and the further enhancement of the effectiveness of the sanctions regime against Al-Qaida and the Taliban. It is a true counter-terrorism instrument in the hands of the United Nations and the international community. It is of fundamental importance that the aforementioned fundamental principles guide Afghanistan's leadership and UNAMA in assisting a political settlement in Afghanistan.

We continue to harbour serious concerns regarding the security situation in Afghanistan. Of heightened concern in that respect is the growing negative trend in the northern regions of the country, which have been relatively calm until recently, where Taliban and other extremist incursions are on the increase. We share the United Nations alarm at the number of civilian casualties caused by the terrorist activities of Al-Qaida and the Taliban. At the same time, it remains urgent to ensure that the operations undertaken by the international military presence in Afghanistan be more targeted.

The Russian Federation is deeply concerned by the situation in Afghanistan in the field of the production and illicit traffic in narcotics, which have evolved into a real threat not only to regional but also international peace and security. We believe that such a description of these challenges should be incorporated into future Security Council decisions on Afghanistan. Combating this phenomenon, which is directly link to the spread of extremism and terrorism, requires a comprehensive and systemic approach combining the ongoing use of force, including in the eradication of drug crops, and solving the social problems of Afghan society, which would involve the elimination of poverty, a transition to the cultivation of alternative agricultural crops, and the fight against corruption.

It is clear to us that, given the scale of the Afghan drug threat, the efforts of the Afghan Government alone will be insufficient. There is a need for joint action by the international community under United Nations auspices and with the active participation of all interested States and international and regional organizations, including NATO, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. These objectives would be furthered by the forging of a broad counter-narcotics coalition, with the involvement, beyond the aforementioned structures, of civil society institutions. We expect the contingents of NATO State members in Afghanistan to cooperate even more actively on this issue with the Afghan Government. More energetic action is also needed to suppress the trade in precursors, without which heroin cannot be manufactured.

As a reliable partner to Afghanistan, the Russian Federation is convinced that, through joint efforts under the lead role of the Government of Afghanistan, we will achieve a robust political settlement in that country. Afghanistan's future must be determined by Afghans themselves. The Russian Federation will continue to strengthen its cooperation with Afghanistan and a broad range of international partners for the

successful post-conflict reconstruction of that country and the establishment of a viable State structure, including police and counter-narcotics bodies.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Let me first thank the Secretary-General for his detailed report on the latest developments in Afghanistan and the United Nations activities in the country (S/2010/318). I would like to welcome Special Representative Mr. Staffan de Mistura and to express our gratitude for his comprehensive briefing. Furthermore, we would like to express our appreciation to Mr. De Mistura and his team for having organized a very successful visit of the Security Council's members to Afghanistan.

Our thanks also go to Ambassador Apakan and the Turkish Mission for their leadership during our visit. Our gratitude also goes to the Afghan Government and Ambassador Tanin personally. I would like to take this opportunity, if I may, to thank the Secretariat and its team, which was of great help during our trip.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully aware that the forthcoming September parliamentary elections led by the Government of Afghanistan are of crucial importance to the future political and security development of the country. In that context, we commend the leading and efficient role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in providing the coordination of international technical and logistical support to the electoral process. We are particularly encouraged by the successful work of the Independent Electoral Commission in candidate registration for the election and by the valuable contribution of the Electoral Complaints Commission to those efforts. These achievements give us hope that Afghanistan will succeed in building up the necessary State infrastructure to guarantee the development of a democratic society based on the rule of law and human rights, in particular women's and children's rights.

We commend the realization of the advanced draft of the peace and reintegration programme and the successful organization of the Consultative Peace Jirga hosted by the Afghan Government. We also take positive note of the preparations for the 20 July Kabul Conference and we look forward to seeing concrete outcomes, in particular the Afghan-led plan for improving development, governance and security. We believe that these steps can facilitate efforts towards the adoption of the framework for an intra-Afghan dialogue and give confidence in further discussions on how to reach a sustainable peace process.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is deeply concerned by the security situation in the country. During the reporting period, the number of victims considerably increased, particularly among civilians and children. The sad number of 332 children killed or maimed during the past three months is terrifying testimony to the reality in which Afghan children live. We therefore call upon all sides to the armed conflict in Afghanistan to take all possible measures to preserve the lives of children and civilians.

We recognize the important work of UNAMA in providing advice on the drafting of the national threat assessment, as well as its assistance in the development of the Ministry of Interior's National Police Strategy and the National Police Plan.

We also want to emphasize the importance of the existing good cooperation between the International Security Assistance Force, NATO and UNAMA. We hope that practice will be continued in the future.

Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that regional cooperation is indeed of critical importance to achieving a climate of security in the country. Therefore, we highly commend the efforts of the Special Representative and the Afghan Government aimed at promoting and developing relations between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, in particular Pakistan and Iran. In addition, we believe that Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration processes are also crucial for sustainable peace and stability in the country. For that reason, we welcome UNAMA's contribution in that area, in particular its technical support to the preparations of the Consultative Peace Jirga, as well as in providing advice on the design of the Afghan Government's programme for peace and reintegration.

In the area of governance and justice, we take positive note of UNAMA's continuing work with justice institutions and the donor community on reform in the context of the National Justice Sector Strategy. An efficient justice system is one of the preconditions for lasting peace and security.

Afghanistan still has enormous humanitarian needs. The remarkable efforts made by UNAMA to respond to the difficult humanitarian situation of

thousands of displaced persons and families in Helmand province deserve great commendation. More generally, in our opinion, UNAMA's role in overall aid coherence is also an important contribution to the long-term development strategy for Afghanistan.

Assisting the Afghan Government in identifying priorities and indicating to donors where gaps and aid duplication exist are among the most essential elements for the better effectiveness of the entire international effort to provide aid support. In that context, we welcome in particular the Afghan Government's progress in establishing four development clusters intended to support economic growth and job creation.

Bosnia and Herzegovina supports all efforts aimed at the return of refugees. We are especially encouraged by the return of 48,000 Afghan refugees from Pakistan through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees programme. We sincerely hope that this trend will continue when it comes to the 2.7 million registered Afghans in Pakistan and Iran. The international community should take the leading role in creating conditions for their sustainable return. In that regard, Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that UNAMA can also contribute to that goal, in concert with the Afghan Government.

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina is particularly sensitive to the issue of mines in Afghanistan. As many observers in the field have reported, children, and especially young boys, are the most frequent victims of mines in Afghanistan. Mine clearance is a long-term process. Providing mine-risk education to the population, with particular focus on children, is essential to the prevention of mine incidents. We therefore commend the United Nations support for the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan and its activities in the field.

In conclusion, Bosnia and Herzegovina would like to express its full support for UNAMA and its entire staff for their efforts. We would also like to express our support for their request for further arrangements to enable UNAMA to address the recruitment of badly needed staff to fulfil the Mission's mandate.

I would also like to extend our condolences to the family of the victim of yesterday's attack and to UNAMA staff.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Permanent Representative of Mexico.

We, too, are grateful to Staffan de Mistura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, for his introduction of the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/318) and for his resolve in carrying out his responsibilities. We also express our gratitude for the statement delivered by Ambassador Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, as well as for the hospitality and cooperation of his Government during our recent stay in his country. We also wish to commend the leadership of Ambassador Apakan, Permanent Representative of Turkey, which made possible the success of the recent visit of the Security Council to Afghanistan.

This debate and the recent trip of the Security Council to Afghanistan reflect the fact that peace and stability in that country are and must remain among the main priorities on our agenda. During our trip, we were able to take note of the political and military dimensions of the conflict in Afghanistan and of the prospects for its eventual resolution, bearing in mind the regional context.

We agree with the report of the Secretary-General in that, during the current transition towards greater Afghan responsibility for the peace process, it is important that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) focus its efforts on a host of priority tasks to which it can bring the greatest added value and on which it can work effectively. In that regard, my delegation attaches the greatest importance to the following aspects of UNAMA's mandate.

The first is the strengthening of cooperation with the civilian command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and NATO with a view to improving civilian-military coordination. The second is support for legislative elections by providing technical assistance and promoting the participation of society in the elections with a view to strengthening democratic practices and conferring legitimacy on Government institutions. The third is the Mission's use of its good offices to support the implementation of reconciliation programmes under the leadership of the Afghan Government itself and in line with its national priorities.

With regard to security, we regret that ongoing incidents of violence remain the crucial factor affecting

progress in Afghanistan. The development of the country and its people is seriously affected by the absence of a secure environment, especially for the most vulnerable, including women and children. In that regard, we believe it essential that, given the recent change in its command, ISAF operations should continue to make the protection of the Afghan population a high priority. We emphatically condemn violence against UNAMA personnel and regret the loss of life among its staff.

In addition, we are also concerned by the high number of children who have been injured or killed in acts of violence associated with the conflict. We support the executive order issued by the Ministry of Interior on 25 April to prevent the recruitment of children to police forces.

Against that backdrop, it is a matter of priority for the Afghan Government to gradually assume its responsibilities in the area of security and that Afghan forces responsible for ensuring justice have at their disposal the human, political and financial resources necessary to fully assume their responsibilities. To that end, UNAMA and the Security Council will need to continue to provide the necessary support.

On the issue of the fight against organized crime, we reiterate the importance of addressing illicit drug production and trafficking by adopting an approach based on shared responsibility, taking into account that this will contribute to generating mutual trust and will promote common strategies to combat that phenomenon in the region.

We also believe that to contribute to restoring the confidence of the population in Afghan public institutions, justice and accountability processes must be implemented, focusing on vulnerable groups such as children and ethnic and religious minorities, in order to consolidate sustainable peace.

We welcome the holding of the Peace Jirga, which had a high percentage of women among its participants, and we support the peace and reintegration programme of the Afghan Government to promote the reintegration into society of anti-Government elements who want to lay down their arms, bearing in mind that, given the country's current circumstances, military actions must be complemented with measures for dialogue and confidence-building in order to counter the current cycle of violence.

Lastly, we trust that, during the upcoming international conference to be held in Kabul, the Afghan Government will adopt specific measures to strengthen institutions and the rule of law in that country, especially through the fight against corruption and impunity.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. McNee (Canada): Canada thanks the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2010/318) and welcomes his assessment of the situation in Afghanistan. At the outset, I would like to join others in expressing our deep condolences for the death of the United Nations staff member killed yesterday.

The security situation indeed remains very challenging. However, it is encouraging to see progress in such areas as electoral reform and reintegration. Canada also welcomes the recent Security Council mission to Afghanistan under Turkey's leadership. It is, in our view, very important to maintain the Council's focus on Afghanistan and for Council members to be able to meet with key interlocutors in Kabul and elsewhere in the country.

The upcoming Afghan-led international conference, the first of its kind in Kabul, will be an important opportunity for the Afghan Government to engage Afghans in the future of their country. At the Group of Eight (G8) Summit held on 25 and 26 June in Canada, leaders outlined their interest in seeing the Government of Afghanistan deliver detailed plans and show tangible progress in implementing the commitments made at the London Conference.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Staffan de Mistura, is giving strong and skilful leadership to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The four priorities on which he has chosen to focus — namely, support for the elections, reconciliation and reintegration, regional cooperation and aid coherence — are of critical importance and include areas of interest that were also highlighted by the G8. The United Nations efforts to focus on these priorities are very important. Nonetheless, it will also be necessary not to lose sight of other crucial areas such as humanitarian assistance and sustained support to security transition efforts.

Canada recognizes UNAMA's need to restructure in order to ensure that its important work in Afghanistan continues with minimal disruption, considering the ongoing challenges such as security threats against its staff, high vacancy rates and operational difficulties in some areas. Given these challenges, Canada supports the United Nations decision to consolidate its offices. However, given the Afghan Government's lack of capacity at the sub-national level, which impacts on its ability to deliver services to Afghans where they live, the United Nations Mission will need to seek ways to enable its continued engagement outside Kabul.

In our view, the United Nations should continue to coordinate the international community's political engagement in the context of the upcoming elections. Canada welcomes the Afghan Government's steps to address some of the international community's core concerns, including a new Independent Electoral Commission Chair, the inclusion of two international commissioners in the Electoral Complaints Commission and the clarification that a minimum level of women's representation in elected office remains guaranteed under the law.

Despite these areas of progress, the upcoming elections face continued challenges. The United Nations support for the elections must be sufficiently robust to allow for the resolution of key issues related to the electoral law, while at the same time supporting the technical delivery of the elections.

Key to stability in Afghanistan is Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration that reaches out to those who renounce violence, respect the Afghan Constitution and have no links with Al-Qaida or other terrorist organizations. In that context, the recent Peace Jirga was an important milestone. Canada commends Afghan Government efforts to develop a peace and reintegration programme. We urge the Government to ensure that this programme and the work of the peace council are consistent with Afghanistan's international legal obligations, such as the protection of human rights, including the rights of women, victims and ex-combatants.

The implementation of a well-coordinated, gradual transition of security responsibilities to Afghan authorities is a key objective to be achieved as soon as conditions on the ground permit. An increase in the capability of the Afghan National Security Forces — well coordinated with the Afghan Ministries of Defence and Interior — is essential in that regard. The anticipated joint Afghan-International Security Assistance Force transition plan to be presented at the Kabul Conference should garner functional capabilities, resources and regional conditions to enable the Afghan National Security Forces to ensure and maintain peace and stability.

Canada supports efforts to reform and build the capacity of the Interior Ministry and, more specifically, the separation of the Minister's political functions from operational police command. Canada also welcomes the development of the National Police Strategy and Plan and continues to encourage the finalization of those documents. The progress made on police recruitment is also welcome. We recognize that improving the quality of the police force is perhaps as important as its size.

(*spoke in French*)

Canada recognizes the continued role played by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in coordinating humanitarian assistance. Canada applauds the efforts made to date by the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to update contingency plans to respond rapidly and effectively to conflict-affected and displaced persons. We urge that lessons learned be applied in Kandahar, especially in view of the impending military operations.

The regional dimension of the situation in Afghanistan requires momentum and attention from Afghanistan's neighbours, the countries of the region, the broader international community and the United Nations, in particular in terms of the implementation of durable solutions for Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons. Recent efforts to increase regional cooperation in Kabul are encouraging. Canada continues to support regional cooperation through confidence-building initiatives such as the Dubai process, which is delivering tangible progress on Afghan and Pakistani shared border management issues, and the G8 Afghanistan-Pakistan Border Region Prosperity Initiative, which aims to improve regional connectivity and dialogue.

The coming months, during which the Kabul Conference and the parliamentary elections will take place, will be crucial for achieving measurable success by the Afghan Government and the international community. It is essential at this critical juncture for

Afghans, the Afghan Government and the international community to continue to work together intensively to rebuild a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Italy.

Mr. Ragaglini (Italy): Let me join previous speakers in welcoming Ambassador Staffan de Mistura on the occasion of his first appearance at the Security Council as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. I would also like to thank him for his briefing and his comprehensive overview of the situation in the country. Italy looks forward to working with him and wishes him success in his challenging mission.

Let me also take this opportunity to express my sincerest condolences for yesterday's killing in Kabul of a United Nation's staff member, an Afghan national. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, for his important remarks.

I would like to underline that Italy fully supports the statement to be delivered by the head of the delegation of the European Union. I would like to add just a few remarks drawing on our national experience and our significant civil and military commitment to Afghanistan.

The Kabul Conference, which will be co-chaired by the United Nations, will open in less than three weeks. It will not be a pledging event; rather it will be an opportunity for the Government of Afghanistan to renew its commitment to its people. At the same time, President Karzai is expected to follow up on the commitments made at the London Conference, namely, assuming greater responsibility in the areas of security, governance and development.

The international community, for its part, must continue to encourage the Afghan authorities to make further efforts to speed up the transition process, the fundamental pillars of which will be formally determined at the Kabul Conference. As emphasized previously by Special Representative de Mistura, donors are also expected to commit to the harmonization and alignment of aid, ensuring that Afghan institutions achieve the highest degree of ownership. Italy fully shares that goal and is already channeling most of its funds through the Afghan budget.

We share the view that the military presence in Afghanistan is still necessary to guarantee a stable security framework. Strengthening international cooperation and enhancing training and mentoring programmes for the Afghan National Security Forces and Police are mainstays of that effort.

The number of Italian trainers in the framework of the NATO training mission should reach a total of almost 600 by the end of this year. In that regard, approximately 400 training and mentoring operatives have already been deployed in the field, namely in Herat province. The number will be brought to approximately 520 by the end of this summer. We are currently planning the deployment of a support team of 40 specialists who will train Afghan helicopter pilots at the airbase of Shindand. We are also planning the deployment of a group of 30 carabinieri to train Afghan border police. In addition, the specialization training centre of the Guardia di Finanza — the Italian financial police — has just completed a three-week training course for 20 officers of the Afghan customs and border police. The initiative aims to strengthen the border control capacity of the Afghan authorities.

The military presence, however, cannot be open-ended. It has to be accompanied, and then replaced, by increased civilian cooperation. Afghanistan is not just a security challenge; it can also be a source of economic opportunity. For example, the western region of the country, including Herat, whose provincial reconstruction team is led by Italy, provides an example of best practices at work, with the positive cooperation in the marble and agro-industrial sectors becoming a model of private sector development. Boosting investment and trade in Afghanistan could, no doubt, break the vicious cycle of poverty and instability.

That approach must go hand in hand with increased efforts to strengthen governance both at national and local levels and to support anti-corruption strategies and capacity-building programmes in the public sector. The key to success in Afghanistan lies in building strong and reliable institutions and in consolidating trust between institutions and the people. In that context, I would like to mention the support provided by the Italian Government to the Independent National Legal Training Centre. Thanks to this and other similar initiatives, over 2,500 judges, prosecutors and Afghan officials have been trained so far. Another

Italian initiative — a training course for Afghan diplomats — is already being prepared.

Provincial reconstruction teams should also play an important role in the transition process. We therefore support expanding the scope of teams' intervention and giving it more of a civilian focus. At the same time, Afghan authorities must play a more extensive and independent role in the management of security, governance and development.

Italy is now more convinced than ever that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) should remain at the helm of the civilian sector, ensuring coherence in international assistance. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's commitment, as outlined in his latest report (S/2101/318), to a continued long-term presence in Afghanistan.

We also welcome UNAMA's continued support for the electoral process and appreciate Special Representative de Mistura's efforts, which have led to renewed consensus following last year's strained presidential elections. We also commend the concrete approach of the United Nations Development Programme's project on enhancing legal and electoral capacity for tomorrow. In terms of its engagement, content and expected goals, it seems to create the right conditions for long-term reform of the electoral system. We hope that the lessons learned from the 2009 elections will be taken into account so as to improve the electoral process beyond this fall's parliamentary elections and build a lasting and truly democratic electoral system.

Italy welcomes the Peace Jirga, which took place at the beginning of this month and focused on the new strategy for reintegrating insurgents. Italy favours that process, provided that it is adequately balanced, Afghan-led, inclusive and endorsed by the international community. Italy is willing to contribute to the financial instruments that will be set up in this context, provided they allow for full control over the use of resources.

Finally, with regard to regional cooperation, which remains an indispensable part of the overall strategy of stabilization and economic development in Afghanistan, Italy strongly supports initiatives based on a consensus platform open to the participation of all the countries of the region and the international community. We therefore look forward to the development of the Kabul Silk Road initiative recently launched by Special Representative de Mistura.

The importance of a regional approach, particularly in countering illicit trafficking, as reaffirmed at the meeting of foreign ministers of the Group of Eight held in Trieste in June 2009, as well as in London last January, is widely recognized. Regional programmes such as the one developed by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in line with the deliverables of the Paris Pact initiative and the Rainbow Strategy indeed support participating Member States in their response to the threat of drug trafficking and related crimes, such as money-laundering, smuggling in precursor chemicals and organized crime. Our involvement must continue, and possibly increase.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Germany.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): At the outset, let me thank Special Representative Staffan de Mistura for his briefing this morning and, more generally, for his strong leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which he has displayed since taking office. I would also like to express to him my condolences for the death of his staff member, who apparently fell victim to a terrorist attack this morning.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement to be made by the representative of the European Union.

My country enjoys a close relationship with Afghanistan and its people. We are a major contributor to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), as well as of development assistance to Afghanistan. I should like to highlight three issues that are key to any further development in Afghanistan. They are the Kabul Conference, the Peace Jirga and the role of UNAMA.

The upcoming Kabul Conference will be an important next step to review implementation and agree on further specific implementation steps, in particular in the field of economic and social development. The improvement of basic services and governance will be a focus of the Conference. At the same time, the future of Afghanistan will depend as much on a stable regional situation as on a genuine domestic reform process. The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan remains key to regional stability. We therefore welcome the fact that regional

cooperation will also be a key topic in Kabul. We believe that emphasis on Afghan ownership and the concept of transition of responsibility should be guiding principles. We welcome the fact that, for the first time, an international Afghanistan conference will be held in the country itself.

Germany believes that reintegration and reconciliation are cornerstones for a political solution to further positive development in Afghanistan. The Peace Jirga was an important first step. We should all focus our efforts on proper implementation, which is likely to remain a challenge. That process needs to be Afghan-led. The international community can provide only a supporting role. Germany is ready to work constructively towards that.

The reconstruction process in Afghanistan has more than one component. My country has sought a comprehensive civilian-military approach all along. We therefore welcome ISAF's new strategy of focusing counterinsurgency operations on the civilian population, with a view to further enabling the Afghan National Security Forces to operate and improving governance and development.

Let me conclude by highlighting that under the umbrella of the United Nations my country will continue to contribute substantially to the efforts of the international community in Afghanistan. We will double our civilian assistance to about $550 million per year, support the reintegration trust fund, further strengthen our training efforts for the Afghan Security Forces by providing 1,400 soldiers to train the army and, in the light of a tense security situation, continue to focus on training Afghan National Security Forces in joint operations. We are also sending 260 police trainers to the country to train the Afghan Police.

With the new UNAMA leadership team appointed, the budget increase approved and the granting of special delegation of recruitment authority to the Mission, important parameters have been set that pave the way for re-energizing UNAMA on the ground. At the same time, our expectations should remain realistic and focused on key priorities.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ambassador Pedro Serrano, acting head of the European Union delegation to the United Nations.

Mr. Serrano: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for giving the floor to the European Union. The candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Let me join others in welcoming the first briefing by Special Representative Staffan de Mistura to the Security Council, as well as the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2010/318). Let me also thank Ambassador Tanin for his important statement, and Ambassador Apakan for his presentation on the Security Council's recent trip to Afghanistan.

During the past few months, as mentioned by Mr. de Mistura, the European Union (EU) has continued its excellent cooperation with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The EU Special Representative, Mr. Ušackas, has taken up his duties and is working closely with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The European Union commends the efforts by the Afghan Government since the last debate of the Security Council, on 18 March, to further advance the agenda agreed at the London Conference, particularly since they were pursued against the background of an increasingly deteriorating security situation that particularly affected the civilian population.

The European Union agrees that the Peace Jirga held in Kabul was successful and notes in particular that participation was high and from a wide spectrum of Afghan society, with 20 per cent of the delegates being female. As the steps towards reconciliation and reintegration take shape, the EU wishes to stress that those processes should remain Afghan-led, based on renunciation of any form of violence and in conformity with the Constitution, as well as on Afghanistan's international commitments, including to human rights. Strengthened regional cooperation also remains essential. In that context, we welcome the renewed diplomatic engagement between Afghanistan and countries in the region, and look forward to the next session of the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan.

The EU agrees that the Kabul Conference on 20 July should not be a pledging conference but an occasion for the international community to lend support to the Government's renewed commitments to

its people. We also welcome the co-chairing of the Conference buy the United Nations. We look forward to the presentation of a peace and reintegration programme and national priority programmes on security, governance and the three development clusters, as well as the joint Afghan-International Security Assistance Force way forward for the transition to Afghan security. The EU welcomes Afghanistan's determination to set priorities at the Conference and supports increasing the proportion of aid delivered through the Afghan Government.

Since governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights and Afghan institution-building are also the bases for progress in other areas, including security and development, we strongly believe that the Kabul Conference should give explicit political support to achieving progress in all of these areas, including the fight against corruption under the governance cluster. In particular, there is a need to advance the development of the formal justice sector and police reform, which the European Union supports through the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan and its contribution to the Law and Order Trust Fund.

The Kabul Conference will also provide an opportunity to give a much higher profile to issues such as human rights, gender equality, freedom of expression and transitional justice. We note with concern reports that the space for human rights defenders has become increasingly limited, and not only because of the deteriorating security situation.

Turning to the upcoming elections on 18 September, we commend the work done by the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission, with support from UNAMA, to prepare for elections, building on lessons learned from 2009. Holding credible, fair, inclusive and secure elections, reflecting the will of the Afghan people, is in the interests of the Afghan Government. In view of that, we note with satisfaction that the registration of candidates has concluded without incident and that the number of female candidates, compared with the 2005 parliamentary elections, has significantly increased. Ensuring adequate security will be crucial to the whole electoral process, particularly for female candidates. As the Secretary-General indicates in his report, we would also like to underline the need for more comprehensive and long-term electoral reform.

In the European Union's view, UNAMA is well on track with the implementation of its refocused mandate. Yet we note that recruitment continues to be a matter of concern, mainly for security reasons. Against this background, we commend the commitment of UNAMA's staff and would like to express our condolences for the recent loss of one of its members. As stated in the European Union action plan for Afghanistan, the EU will continue its support for UNAMA and the role of the United Nations in the region.

In closing, let me reiterate that the European Union welcomes the Government's intention to make a new contract with the Afghan people, and stands ready to lend strong support to this endeavour. The European Union remains fully committed to a secure and democratic future for the Afghan people.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Ms. Juul (Norway): International support for Afghanistan is taking its toll in many ways. A few days ago, Norway lost four soldiers in action, and yesterday we were saddened to hear of the loss of one United Nations national staff member. The International Security Assistance Force losses for June this year totaled more than 100 soldiers.

It is more important than ever that we maintain our resolve to see our effort through. Afghanization is not a euphemism for exit and implies no quick solution, but rather underlines the importance of an Afghan-driven process that is responsible, inclusive and truly national in nature, aiming at a better future for the Afghan people. That resolve to help the Afghan people is mandated by the Security Council and is increasingly focused on being Afghan-led and on prospects for a political solution. Our international obligations are long-term but our commitments should be guided by pragmatism and realism, thus avoiding unrealistic benchmarks and artificial deadlines.

We welcome the first briefing by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura. We commend the very professional and sound commitment he brings to the task. We also welcome his focus on the three-plus-one priorities for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in implementing its new mandate in a flexible and realistic way that also reflects current political realities.

However, we would particularly emphasize the importance of continued United Nations support for advancing the human rights agenda in close cooperation with Afghan authorities and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, including the role of civil society in promoting fundamental rights and freedoms for all Afghans in tomorrow's Afghanistan. The need for international civilian support to the Afghan people is undiminished, as is the need for constructive partnerships between Afghan authorities and the United Nations.

It is important to protect UNAMA's added value, in particular its international legitimacy, political outreach, field presence and role as international guarantor for the integrity of the political process leading to increased Afghan ownership. To that end, it is vital that the vacancy rate in UNAMA is further reduced and security for its staff properly ensured. More flexible use of UNAMA's critical staff is welcomed, but should never compromise the Mission's ability to implement its comprehensive mandate.

The Consultative Peace Jirga, held in Kabul four weeks ago, also highlighted the need for reconciliation and sustainable peace. We note in particular the commitment to demand a just peace that guarantees the rights of all of the country's citizens, including women and children. Many women in Afghanistan are concerned about their role and rights in terms of the outcome of the reconciliation process. Any Afghan reconciliation process must be Afghan-led and in conformity with the country's Constitution. But only a political process that can provide a political settlement with the armed opposition without alienating groups that support the Afghan Government will be sustainable.

Addressing issues of transitional justice and human rights in a context of ongoing conflict is indeed challenging, but all Afghans need to be included in a meaningful way and to have their rights protected in the context of the peace process. The Afghan people have an enormous desire and need for justice and good governance. If that is not met, it will be further exploited by the armed opposition. A just and durable solution in Afghanistan must be one that brings about better prospects for all Afghan citizens.

One of the first public achievements of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General was to obtain the necessary guarantees for the upcoming parliamentary elections — particularly to secure the seats reserved for women and ensure an international presence in the handling of complaints. We welcome the work done thus far by the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission to prepare for parliamentary elections in September, including the implementation of fraud mitigation measures. We also welcome the independent nature of the electoral institutions and urge them to ensure transparency and avoid any political interference. But we also note the shortcomings so far with regard to a proper vetting process for candidates.

Adequate security for electoral staff and campaigners will be a crucial task, as will the proper staffing, in particular when it comes to female staff, of the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission at the provincial level. Building on lessons learned from the 2009 elections will also be crucial. We urge the Afghan authorities to start planning for comprehensive long-term electoral reform.

The parliamentary elections will be an important test for Afghan democracy and for the political processes, which go together with Afghan ownership and reconciliation. Strengthening legitimate democratic institutions will enable an intra-Afghan dialogue to take place and will mitigate the risk of further political fragmentation.

The Kabul Conference in July will be the first of its kind to take place inside the county. It will focus on a renewed partnership between the Government and its own people. Rather than raising high expectations for the event, we should focus on realistic achievements and the need to strengthen the implementation phase. The Kabul Conference is an important step in a longer process where Afghan authorities are determined to set their own priorities and implement tangible national programmes supported by the international community under the leadership of the United Nations. Norway looks forward to contributing to that process as a reliable partner for a transition towards responsible Afghan ownership.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Australia welcomes Special Representative of the Secretary-General de Mistura's presence here and his briefing this morning. We also appreciate the latest quarterly report

of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan (S/2010/318), the presence of Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan and the briefings provided today on the recent Security Council mission to Afghanistan. That level of direct engagement in the field by the Council is very reassuring.

The Secretary-General's report and today's briefings underline some crucial and evident factors: the need for an intelligent, hard-headed political vision for Afghanistan's future and a credible political process to achieve that vision; the fact that while military efforts alone will not resolve Afghanistan's conflict, we cannot lose sight of the importance of security to making progress in other areas, such as governance, development and human rights; the indispensability of a credible and effective partner in the Afghan Government itself that can provide basic services and take action against corruption; and the obvious need to give priority to developing Afghan capabilities in order to transition to Afghan ownership.

Australia believes that the basic International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) strategy — which emphasizes protecting the population, increasing and integrating civilian activity within a truly civilian-military approach and focusing on building Afghan capacity — provides a sound basis for addressing those priorities. We look forward to working with General Petraeus in furthering that strategy's implementation. Equally, of course, we look forward very much to the results of the Kabul Conference in July, which should be seminal for determining how Afghanistan sees its own future.

Australia remains fully committed to doing its part in international efforts in Afghanistan. We recently welcomed the decision by ISAF to establish new multinational arrangements, for instance in Uruzgan province to replace the Netherlands lead in that province from 1 August. Most of Australia's troops are in that province. We will continue to play a substantial role in those new arrangements. We will provide a senior civilian to head the provincial reconstruction team as well as the core members of the civilian elements of the team, including diplomatic and development assistance and policing personnel.

Those new civilian enhancements will build on our military contribution, which overall totals some 1,550 Australian defence personnel. The focus of this effort remains on mentoring and training the Afghan National Army's fourth brigade in Uruzgan province so that it can conduct independent security operations and provide security for the Afghan people. Our military personnel are also involved in providing force protection for civilian efforts and in conducting and supporting operations more broadly across regional command south.

We would like to recognize and thank the Netherlands for its achievements in Uruzgan. Australia looks forward to working with the United States as the future lead in the province, as well as with our other ISAF partners, Slovakia and Singapore, to assist in stabilizing the province. We also look forward to continuing engagement with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in expanding civilian efforts across Afghanistan. We strongly support UNAMA's focus on the three-plus-one priorities, namely, support for elections, reconciliation and reintegration and regional cooperation and aid coherence.

We welcome the work under way in preparation for the September Afghan parliamentary elections. We also note that, vitally, that process is Afghan-owned and Afghan-led. The United Nations of course retains a necessary and very important role in coordinating international support for that electoral process.

As Ambassador Tanin has said today, it is important that the Afghan Government learn from the experience of the 2009 elections. Progress to date has been promising, but there is of course, always, more to be done. The Government needs to press ahead with key electoral reforms, with a focus on strengthening anti-fraud measures and improving the capacity of the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission. Those reforms will obviously be critical to building a strong democratic foundation for the elected Government.

We strongly support Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration. We believe that work in that area, at both the grass-roots and the political levels, is critical to ending the conflict, and we will contribute $25 million to the Peace and Reintegration Trust Fund. We greatly welcome the Afghan Government's draft peace and reintegration plan, and we believe that it obviously marks an important step towards Afghan ownership of the reintegration process.

As the Special Representative and others have emphasized today, regional cooperation involving all

Afghanistan's near neighbours is vital to securing stability in Afghanistan and regional stability, including combating transnational issues, such as the narcotics trade and the illegal movement of people. UNAMA's efforts to encourage regional countries to cooperate in halting those activities and to support Afghanistan in its own efforts to achieve security and stability are very welcome.

We share the assessment of the Secretary-General that this is a critical year for Afghanistan. There have been setbacks and there will be more, but we are also seeing real progress. In 2002, 9 per cent of Afghans had access to health care; today, 65 per cent do. Afghan women hold almost a quarter of all seats in Afghanistan's National Assembly, which, I should say, is above the average of 18 per cent right across the world when one does an aggregation. This is a stark contrast to conditions under the oppressive Taliban rule. The number of teachers has almost doubled since 2002 and access to education has, of course, grown dramatically. We need to extend and intensify that progress, but there is progress.

In conclusion, it is obviously important that the Afghan Government and its international partners, including Australia, remain committed to and focused, with fortitude and resolve, to use the words of Ambassador Tanin, on the task at hand: fighting the insurgency, combating corruption, and improving governance and the delivery of essential services to the Afghan people.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. We always appreciate your country's stand on the issue of Afghanistan and, of course, the importance of discussing the Secretary-General's quarterly report, which seems to have become traditional.

I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Turkey, Ambassador Apakan, for having led the Security Council's mission to Afghanistan and Mr. Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his lucid and very fair comments earlier today. I would like to welcome Staffan de Mistura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who certainly brings much experience and, for many of us, more hope for the United Nations work in Afghanistan.

It is the fourth decade of conflict and tragedy in Afghanistan, and I think that the international community must take a more retrospective look at what is emerging there and review what it needs to do to take us towards a better understanding and a better tomorrow for Afghanistan. Needless to say, Pakistan has a very vital interest in our neighbour and developments there as a whole have in fact affected Pakistan equally in all directions.

The latest report (S/2010/318) provides useful information on the reintegration and reconciliation process in Afghanistan. It outlines the complexity of the security situation and identifies the challenges of development and governance, as well as preparations for the forthcoming elections. I need not emphasize that the people of Afghanistan also greatly look forward to the vast sea of change that should become clearer in the next few months.

We believe that a stable Government in Afghanistan, supported by the international community and its own people, is in the vital interest of a peaceful future in the region. We believe that the Consultative Peace Jirga, which was attended by 1,600 people and did not get much mention here today, deserves the international community's recognition and acknowledgement of the importance of their discourse and their conclusions, recommendations and suggestions. We support the Afghan-led intra-Afghan dialogue as the singular most important symbol of ownership of the entire process that we are discussing around the table here today. The communiqué issued by the Peace Jirga on formulating a national strategy for sustainable peace is a very important document that needs further promotion here in these halls.

To say the least, the forthcoming parliamentary elections will, I believe, play a very important role in what will emerge in Afghanistan. I believe that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has a critical and key role to play at this stage in creating the credibility that will make it acceptable to all of us, which at this stage is so important to so many around the world.

We know that the Afghan challenge has been insecurity driven by insurgency and some exploitation by drug traffickers and criminals, who abound everywhere in the world but may be slightly more prominent there. The Secretary-General's report notes no great improvement in that area, and that is

regrettable. However, stereotyping our disappointments has also become regrettable. We must be more understanding. We must try to understand from the perspective of what works.

Here, I digress — with your kind indulgence, Mr. President. The situation is much like a burst tyre or a tube on a bicycle, and we seem to be busy not getting fresh air into the tube, but in fact trying to repair the pump that will bring in the fresh air. That always becomes something that costs much more and creates less of a focus and impact. Very regrettably, that is rather what is happening. We must avoid complacency about what we can achieve and have really achieved. I feel that any real discernment on that ground will prove that we have been a little too complacent.

In his previous report, the Secretary-General noted that we must resolve to implement

> "a political reform that addresses the root causes of the insurgency, including through efforts aimed at improving governance and an Afghan-led political process to re-establish peace" (*S/2009/674, para. 25*).

I believe that we are yet to start doing something concrete in that direction.

The present report emphasizes that

> "[d]eveloping the security sector requires an overarching framework that includes a national threat assessment, which is basis for Afghan national security policy and concomitant strategy" (*S/2010/318, para. 15*)

At this particular stage, I would like to say that the normal answer to this sort of a thing is twofold. First, let us build the capacity of the Afghan National Army and police institutions; secondly, let us talk to the insurgents — that is, the Taliban. I believe that, as far as the latter is concerned, if any one should talk to the Taliban, I must stress to this body that the people sought out must be on a list provided by President Karzai, who will know better whom to talk with in the interest of Afghanistan and the international community. As far as the Afghan National Army is concerned, I will say here without any doubt in my mind that, in a society that does not understand central federal leadership as easily as we do in many other parts of the world — and I quote now Mr. Brzezinski, who put it so ably and is supported by Mr. Brent Srowcroft — "you have to understand that regional loyalties play an important role".

In my own country and the country of my friend the Ambassador of India, when regiments were raised by the British, we very often had regional loyalties. We had the Sikh army, the frontier forces, the Baluch army and the Marathas; and I could go on and on. There was a certain loyalty which came with that. It did not impede an empire from inspiring loyalty, but it worked. I think that should be understood here. And it will be understood if we raise from the absolute base those loyalties at local levels that can then create a stronger National Army and protect and be more successful.

I would like to recognize specifically the role of UNAMA, ably led by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura. With regard to the resolutions for expanding its presence, they are fine, I think. We have talked about it before; it has not happened yet, but we hope to see it happen. One of the greatest things I would admire Mr. De Mistura for, because I know that it is within his capability, would be for him to work with the confidence of President Karzai, because it is so important at this stage for some sort of unanimity to emerge.

With regard to the London Conference, I believe that the implementation of Afghanistan National Development Strategy is going to be very important. But again, as I mentioned earlier, we must ensure that funding reaches to all levels and that it percolates and permeates down to those levels that can find benefit and take substantial consolation and comfort in the fact that the international community cares. UNAMA must leverage this advantage to further streamline result-oriented activities, specifically in the areas of security, development and reconstruction.

I would say that Pakistan is very committed to strengthening our bilateral relationship with Afghanistan. We have had two very important declarations which, again, have not been talked about here much but would be interesting documentation to read and draw lessons from. They are the 2009 Joint Declaration on Future Directions of Bilateral Cooperation, signed by the two Presidents, and the 2010 the Joint Declaration on Next Steps in Afghanistan-Pakistan Comprehensive Cooperation. I believe that we will see further developments with respect to these documents in the coming weeks and months.

Our bilateral trade has recorded very steady growth, and Pakistan has doubled its efforts for education in Afghanistan, despite our own situation. We are also engaged in security and intelligence cooperation with Afghanistan, including through the Tripartite Commission, which includes the United Nations and the International Security Assistance Force. We are also engaged in a trilateral process with the Afghan and Turkish Governments.

We are committed to a voluntary, gradual, safe and dignified return of nearly 3 million Afghan refugees still in Pakistan. There is a need for more diligent and sustained efforts at creating necessary pull-factors in Afghanistan. We would stress the need to strengthen reintegration programmes for refugees within Afghanistan's National Development Strategy. We expect the United Nations and the international community to assist in this endeavour and to understand it specifically from this perspective.

At the conclusion of one decade of engagement with Afghanistan, I repeat a call for introspection and a genuine appraisal of achievements and failures. Afghanistan needs the sustained engagement of the international community, but without interference in its internal affairs. I would conclude by reiterating that long-term objectives of peace, stability and development in Afghanistan can be realized only by respecting its sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of India.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): I would like to thank you, Sir, for scheduling today's debate on the situation in Afghanistan. We are grateful for the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/318) and are appreciative of the briefing by his Special Representative, Staffan de Mistura. We also thank Ambassador Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his statement.

As we move forward, the international approach towards Afghanistan, including the London Conference, has focused on the areas of security, reintegration, development, governance, and regional and international cooperation. We support the efforts of the Afghan Government to reintegrate those individuals who are willing to abjure violence, do not have ties with terrorist groups, and are willing to abide by the values of democracy, pluralism and human rights, as enshrined in the Afghan Constitution. The process must be inclusive and transparent. The forthcoming Kabul Conference and the parliamentary elections scheduled for September will be important milestones in consolidating the progress made so far.

Complementary to the military effort, a sustainable strategy for the stabilization of Afghanistan must focus on development and governance issues. In this context, the focus of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on its priorities, in particular support for elections, regional cooperation and aid coherence would be helpful in achieving greater synergy and coordination of efforts with the Afghan Government.

The success of all our endeavours will be enduring only if their ownership is vested in the Afghan Government and people. In this context, closely intertwined is the need for tangible and sustained improvement in the security situation. This is also absolutely critical to expanding the footprint of the Afghan Government and to creating an enabling environment for lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

As we discussed today, an overall deterioration in the Afghan security environment underscores the significant challenges that confront Afghanistan. The report of the Secretary-General notes that there was a 94 per cent increase in incidents involving improvised explosive devices during the first four months of 2010, a 45 per cent rise in killings of civilians by insurgents, and an increase in complex suicide attacks.

Despite a reinforced presence of the International Security Assistance Forces, the continuous deterioration in the security situation is a stark reminder that the challenge from a resurgent Taliban and Al-Qaida is real, and it is one that threatens us all. The wellsprings that sustain such terror still show no signs of being drained. Civilians, humanitarian personnel, international and United Nations staff and diplomatic personnel, including in our mission in Kabul, have been repeatedly targeted in terrorist attacks. I join others in expressing our condolences for the United Nations staff member killed only yesterday.

There is broad recognition that the increase in terrorist actions in Afghanistan is due to the support and sanctuaries available beyond its borders. The security and stabilization of Afghanistan will remain a distant goal unless we are able to isolate and root out

the syndicate of terrorism, which includes elements of Al-Qaida, Taliban, Lashkar e Toiba and other terrorist and extremist groups operating from within and outside Afghanistan's borders.

We fully support efforts towards the expansion of the capacities of the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army. They should be provided with appropriate resources, combat equipment, enablers and training before any plan for a progressive handover of security responsibilities is considered.

The security of Afghanistan and what happens there impacts us, as a country in the region, a close neighbour and a civilizational partner whose ties with the Afghan people stretch into antiquity. A stable and settled Afghanistan, where the rank and file of the Taliban has given up violence against the Government and the people, cut all links with terrorism and subscribed to the values of the Afghan Constitution and its laws, and where development is the hard rationale is what we seek and strive for. It is important also that such a structure be durable and enduring. Afghanistan's neighbours and regional partners will need to be kept in the picture, both by consultation and by adherence to the principle of non-interference in the country's affairs, ensuring that it thrives as a trade and transit hub for the region and by eradicating transnational terrorism.

While moving forward on the sensitive issues of reintegration and reconciliation, we need to guard against the impulse to arrive at quick-fix solutions. Against the backdrop of today's worrying security situation, these issues need to be tackled with prudence and the benefit of hindsight, foresight and caution.

In India's efforts towards the stabilization of Afghanistan, the focus has been on development and humanitarian work to assist the Afghan people as they build a peaceful, stable, inclusive, democratic and pluralistic nation. We have sought to assist Afghanistan within our means. Our $1.3 billion assistance programme is aimed at building infrastructure; capacity-building in the critical areas of governance, health, education and agriculture; and generating employment. Last year, over 300,000 Afghans, mainly women and children, were provided with free medical treatment at the Indian medical missions in Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif. The economy of the battle-scarred Nimroz province was transformed with the building of the Zaranj-Delaram highway, and the homes of the people of Kabul have been lit, after more than a decade, by the Pul-i-Khumri transmission line from the Uzbek border.

The international community as a whole has made a contribution in assisting Afghanistan to stand on its feet. We welcome these efforts and are fully supportive of them. We support the good work done by UNAMA. If lasting peace and stability are to be established in Afghanistan, it is critical that the international community remain engaged there, both on the security side as well as in development and capacity-building efforts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Mr. De Mistura to make some final comments.

Mr. De Mistura (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, but I would like to apply the principle that we have spoken of today — the priority should go to our Afghan colleague.

(*spoke in English*)

I will speak after him, with your permission.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): I think we have had a very important and constructive debate. We were all on the mission, and we came back with a better understanding of the situation in Afghanistan.

There has been an emphasis in all of our statements today on how, in a short period of time — that is, three months — Mr. De Mistura tried, after a difficult year of elections and issues surrounding the elections, to bring all the stakeholders together, to establish a new dialogue with the Government of Afghanistan, and to help the elements of the international community to work together. I would like again to express our gratitude for his work, which is important and vital for Afghanistan.

I think the only comment I can make after all this debate is that the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghan people are continuing their partnership with the international community. They know how vital are the aid and assistance of the international community. They are well aware of their own responsibilities. As I said before, we would like to work together in this time when it is important for all of us to succeed in transitioning towards a new situation in which Afghans will be at the centre in the defence of their country and

take on the responsibility of security, governance and development of the country.

Here, the United Nations, as it has for all these years, is playing an important role. We appreciate the ideas that participants have raised today and will work together with the Council and with all the representatives of the international community who are engaged towards a successful transition in Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to Mr. De Mistura.

Mr. De Mistura (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor a second time.

(*spoke in English*)

First of all, I thank the Council for all the comments. We have taken careful note of the many good and constructive pieces of advice we have heard.

I have three brief points. The first one is that security is a concern, and participants have been kind enough to remind us of what happened yesterday. In fact, some of us who were together in Jalalabad on the field trip will remember that there was even yesterday an incident at the airport. This is a clear reminder that security is an area in which I myself, on behalf of the Council, will constantly have to square the circle between being proactive, being present, being everywhere and at the same time staying alive. The combination of these will be the challenge that we are going to face during this critical, crucial period, which will be important for Afghanistan and for all of us.

I would like also, on behalf of each of my colleagues, and certainly on behalf of the Secretary-General, to thank the Council for the trust and confidence it has placed in me and my team in Afghanistan. We need that trust and confidence when things get rough — and they are likely to be rough before they get better.

That having been said, the feeling that I am having — perhaps because I am overly optimistic by nature and by professional need — is that the Afghans will find a way. This year is the year when they will be indicating to us in which direction they will go. That is why the issue of security becomes important — and remains important — but our resilience becomes even more important.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.